

Scripture and Traditions

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Scripture and Traditions

Essays on Early Judaism and Christianity
in Honor of Carl R. Holladay

Edited by

Patrick Gray and Gail R. O'Day



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PREFACE

We are pleased to offer this collection of essays to Carl R. Holladay in celebration of his sixty-fifth birthday. The contributors to this volume are Professor Holladay's teachers, students, and colleagues who happily honor Carl's contribution to New Testament scholarship with this volume.

Carl R. Holladay was born on October 18, 1943, in Huntingdon, Tennessee. Upon graduating from high school, he entered Freed-Hardeman College in nearby Henderson, where he met his future wife, Donna. After a move to Texas, he received his Bachelor of Arts degree (*summa cum laude*) in 1965 and his Master of Divinity degree in 1969, both from Abilene Christian University. At Abilene he studied with such scholars as LeMoine Lewis, Everett Ferguson, Tom Olbricht, and Abraham Malherbe, in whose footsteps he would soon follow as part of the second generation from the Campbellite tradition to pursue doctoral degrees in biblical studies at prestigious U.S. and international universities. Although a relatively small Christian denomination, the Churches of Christ placed a premium on an educated professoriate in biblical studies. This tradition has produced a highly distinguished cadre of biblical scholars, whose numbers exceed that of many larger denominations. Many of those scholars are represented in this volume. Carl continued his studies at Princeton Theological Seminary, but when his advisor Bertil Gärtner returned to Sweden to become the Lutheran bishop of Gothenburg, he finished the necessary work for the Th.M. degree and decided to move to England with his growing family.

At Cambridge, Carl studied with C. F. D. Moule and in 1975 completed his dissertation on the "divine man" in Hellenistic Judaism and early Christianity under the direction of Ernst Bammel. As there were no job openings in the United States for New Testament scholars in the fall of 1975, Carl returned to Huntingdon and managed the furniture store that his parents had opened years earlier. The course of New Testament scholarship over the last three decades would have looked very different had it not been for a phone call, out of the blue, offering Carl a post at Yale Divinity School in the fall of 1976. He taught at Yale—where he shared an office for a time with Luke Timothy Johnson—until receiving an appointment in 1980 to teach at the Candler School of Theology of Emory University in Atlanta.

Professor Holladay's scholarship has earned him the respect of scholars from around the world. His critical editions of the fragmentary Hellenistic Jewish authors have become indispensable resources for scholars of early Judaism, New Testament, and patristics. His writings have made significant contributions to longstanding debates about the Christology of the New Testament. Specialists in the field, however, are not the only beneficiaries of Carl's work. His *Biblical Exegesis: A Beginner's Handbook* (co-written with John Hayes) has introduced countless students to the basic tasks of biblical interpretation. This book has gone through three editions, clear evidence of its effectiveness and importance as a teaching resource. His *A Critical Introduction to the New Testament: Interpreting the Message and Meaning of Jesus Christ*, in which Professor Holladay approaches New Testament introduction as a theological enterprise, likewise promises to become a fixture in courses on the Bible for years to come. These contributions to the academic study of the Bible have been combined with a concern for the teaching and preaching of the Bible in the church, as is evident from his collaboration with Fred Craddock, John Hayes, and Gene Tucker on the multi-volume *Preaching the New Common Lectionary* and *Preaching Through the Christian Year*.

It is typically at the end of a distinguished career that scholars have *festschriften* dedicated to them, but Carl's contributions are far from finished. In addition to a fifth volume on the fragmentary Hellenistic Jewish literature and a survey of the cultural milieu of nascent Christianity, he is at work on a major commentary on Acts for the New Testament Library.

Professor Holladay's contributions to New Testament scholarship and to theological education cannot simply be represented by a review of his scholarly production. At Candler School of Theology, Carl served for nearly a decade as academic dean, leaving his mark on the shape of Candler's curriculum and the development of an internationally recognized research faculty. His service to the biblical studies guild includes leadership on the editorial boards of *Novum Testamentum* and *Restoration Quarterly*. Perhaps most importantly for Carl, he continues to mentor the next generation of biblical scholars from the Churches of Christ through his work as the executive director of the Christian Scholarship Foundation, which provides scholarship support for the best and the brightest of the Churches of Christ. Carl has embodied in his career the full professorial commitment to teaching, research, and institutional service. Candler School of Theology, the biblical studies guild, and the Churches of Christ are immeasurably better because of Carl Holladay's contributions.

ABBREVIATIONS

All abbreviations conform to the guidelines found in *The SBL Handbook of Style* (ed. P. H. Alexander et al.; Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1999).

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PART ONE

HELLENISTIC JUDAISM

DISRESPECTING DIONYSUS: 3 MACCABEES AS NARRATIVE SATIRE OF THE GOD OF WINE

N. Clayton Croy

INTRODUCTION

In September 1989 I began coursework for a Ph.D. in Religion (New Testament/Early Christianity) at Emory University. One of my first seminars was “Hellenistic Judaism” under the tutelage of Professor Carl R. Holladay. I had grown up in a theologically conservative Christian congregation in which Bible studies were standard fare and Scripture memorization was regarded as a virtuous and salutary practice. I attended a college and seminary in the same tradition and thereby added critical study methods to my pietistic appreciation of the Bible. But my relatively strong background in biblical content betrayed its Protestant bias by way of a glaring omission: I was woefully ignorant of the apocryphal writings. So Professor Holladay had the challenging task of introducing me both to the basic content and themes of the Apocrypha (along with many other Jewish writings of the era) as well as the broad historical context, critical interpretive issues, and the relevance of this literature to the study of early Christianity.

Indeed, it turned out to be quite relevant to my developing area of expertise. My dissertation included a fairly extensive section tracing certain themes through Hellenistic Jewish literature. More surprising was an opportunity which came along a few years after I completed the degree: the chance to write a brief commentary on the little known book of 3 Maccabees for the Brill Septuagint Commentary Series. I welcomed this opportunity, confident that my commentary, once completed, would (by default) be the premier, full scale commentary on 3 Maccabees in English (or any other language for that matter). In the process of researching and writing on 3 Maccabees, I developed two simple criteria for all future project selections in the area of commentary writing. I would choose only ancient texts that were (1) short, and (2) obscure, thus insuring that the project would generally be manageable in scope, and that the entirety of the scholarly literature would fit in a large shoebox.

Apart from an occasional snag over editorial matters, the 3 Maccabees commentary turned out to be a delight to write. Without Carl Holladay's orientation to this particular writing and its broad Hellenistic context, I probably wouldn't have dared to accept the project. So it was with much gratitude that I dedicated the commentary to him, and with similar appreciation I make this modest contribution to his *Festschrift*.

The most fascinating discovery that I made while studying 3 Maccabees was a subtle undercurrent of satire in the work. The major episode in the narrative occurs when Egypt's ruler, Ptolemy IV Philopator (ca. 244–205 BCE), decides to register the Jews of Alexandria and reduce them to slave status unless they submit to the imposition of the cult of the Greek god, Dionysus (2:25–30). Needless to say, this precipitates a crisis, with the majority of the Jews refusing to comply, even on penalty of death. This enraged the king, who ordered the roundup and execution of all Jews in the surrounding area. The Jews were gathered in the hippodrome and were registered until supplies of paper and ink were exhausted. By the intervention of God, the destruction of the Jews is postponed, first due to a sleep that God sent upon Ptolemy, then due to an affliction of amnesia. On a third attempt, the Jews are brought to the brink of destruction by means of intoxicated, rampaging elephants. When the priest Eleazar prays that God would avert the catastrophe, two glorious angels descend from heaven and turn the elephants back against the king's forces. Philopator has a remarkable change of heart and releases the Jewish prisoners to return home. Festive celebrations and commemorative dedications conclude the book.

Interpreters of 3 Maccabees, admittedly a relatively small group, have failed to observe that Philopator's three attempts to exterminate the Jews were each thwarted by common, but pathological side effects of excessive indulgence in wine: sleep, memory loss, and rage. The significance of this fact is immediately seen when one remembers that wine is the foremost characteristic of the king's patron deity, Dionysus. Although the god is actually named only once in 3 Maccabees (2:29), his most essential attribute is pervasive in the narrative: Philopator's court is awash in wine. It is reasonable to suggest that the means by which the king's genocidal decree is thwarted are neither random nor coincidental. They are, in fact, subtle indications that Philopator's misdirected worship causes the frustration of his plans and his ultimate downfall. The liabilities of devotion to Dionysus, with its attendant excess, are the very means of Philopator's undoing. The author is thus simultaneously ridiculing the god of wine and exalting the God of Israel. In my

commentary I identified the major aims of 3 Maccabees as fourfold: hortatory, apologetic, polemical, and, to a lesser extent, etiological.¹ To these I would now like to add a fifth: satirical. Philopator and his deity are lampooned.

There is always a possibility that an observation of this kind might derive from the interpreter's overactive imagination, correlating chance details of the text with modern notions of intoxication. That need not be the case here, however, given the fact that drunkenness is hardly a phenomenon limited to modern times. People in antiquity knew quite well that intoxication led to a variety of psychological and physical effects. But for a satirical interpretation of 3 Maccabees to be compelling, one would need to show that (1) the cult of Dionysus was thoroughly associated with wine; (2) the cult was practiced in Egypt, so as to be part of the readers' experience, or at least their cultural memory; (3) there are sufficient indications in 3 Maccabees of the Dionysian cult and its excesses; and (4) drunkenness was associated in antiquity with sleep, memory loss, and rage. These components of the argument constitute the next four sections of this essay.

1. DIONYSUS AND WINE

Dionysus was the son of Zeus and Semele. He was taken from the womb of his dying mother and carried to term by his father, eventually being born from the thigh of Zeus. He was adopted by the Romans as Bacchus, and his frenzied attendants or priestesses were called Bacchae, most famously in the Euripidean tragedy of the same name. Dionysus was "the most versatile and elusive of all Greek gods."² A wide variety of functions and provinces are associated with him, but certain ones are dominant. The god's name appears on three fragments of Linear B tablets dated to about 1250 BCE, one of which "may point to a tenuous connection between Dionysus and wine."³ Artistic portrayals of Dionysus prominently feature wine, ivy, and festive dancing.⁴

¹ N. Clayton Croy, *3 Maccabees* (Septuagint Commentary Series; Leiden: Brill, 2006), xix.

² Albert Henrichs, "Dionysus," *OCD*³, 479.

³ Ibid. See also Walter Burkert, *Greek Religion* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1985), 53–58.

⁴ Several books on Dionysus and his cult provide drawings or photos of inscriptions, reliefs, vase paintings, sarcophagi, mosaics, frescoes, etc. See Walter F. Otto, *Dionysus*:

The earliest literary references to Dionysus are found in Homer (e.g., *Il.* 6.132–37). The epic bard seems familiar with the cult and its myths, but he makes no explicit connection between Dionysus and wine. In his study of the Greek gods W. K. C. Guthrie argues that little should be made of this.

It has often been noted that there are no direct references in Homer to Dionysos as god of wine, and the inference has been made that this was not a part of his original nature. Certainly Dionysos was very much more than the god of wine... Yet wine, and all that it stands for, seems so essential to his nature that it is difficult to believe that it was only a later accretion, and it would be dangerous to argue from the silence of Homer, who so clearly knew more about the god than his lordly indifference allowed him to say.⁵

Guthrie goes on to suggest that even Homer may imply a connection to wine by the remark that “Semele bore Dionysus, *a joy to mortals*” (*Il.* 14.325).⁶

The connection first becomes explicit in Hesiod, who speaks of the fall harvest of grapes being gathered, first exposed to the sun and then shaded, and finally their juice being poured into jars: “the gift of glad Dionysus” (*Op.* 608–14). The most revealing statement, however, is found in a fragment of Hesiod’s, an adage that not only associates Dionysus and wine, but also foreshadows other phenomena to be found in 3 Maccabees. The fragment is preserved in Athenaeus (*Deipn.* 10.428C).

Such gifts Dionysus has given to men: joy and grief!
Whoever drinks to his fill, maddening wine comes upon him,
and with feet and hands it binds both tongue and mind
with unseen chains, and gentle sleep befriends him.

Here we have the convergence of the god’s name, the province of wine, its maddening effect, and the consequence of sleep.

Myth and Cult (Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press, 1965); Martin P. Nilsson, *The Dionysiac Mysteries of the Hellenistic and Roman Age* (New York: Arno, 1975); C. Kerényi, *Dionysos: Archetypal Image of Indestructible Life* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1976); and Everett Ferguson, *Backgrounds of Early Christianity* (3rd ed.; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003), 259–66. Henrichs (“Dionysus,” 481) notes that “No other deity is more frequently represented in ancient art than Dionysus.”

⁵ W. K. C. Guthrie, *The Greeks and their Gods* (London: Methuen & Co., 1950), 164. See also Otto, *Dionysus*, 145–46, and Burkert, *Greek Religion*, 412 n. 2.

⁶ Translations, unless otherwise indicated, are my own.

The association of Dionysus with wine is not only early but pervasive, so pervasive that a handful of references will have to suffice to illustrate the point. The classic depiction of Dionysian frenzy is that of Euripides's *Bacchae*. During the worshippers' ecstasy the ground was said to flow "with milk, wine, and honey" (*Bacch.* 142). Dionysus is the giver of "the painless delight of wine" (423), and "the grape clustered joy of the vine" (534–35). A few centuries later Plutarch asserts that the Greeks consider Dionysus "lord and founder" (κύριος καὶ ἀρχηγός) not only of wine, but of "the whole moist element" in nature (*Is. Os.* 365A).⁷ But even the wording "*not only* of wine" appears to be an attempt to supplement the conventional view, and elsewhere Plutarch refers to drunkenness and wine as the work of Dionysus (*Sept. sap. conv.* 156C). Longus, a second-century CE novelist, describes the grape harvest as "a festival of Dionysus and the birth of wine" (*Daphn.* 2.2.1). In late antiquity the epic poet Nonnus (fl. 450–70 CE) wrote an extensive poem detailing Dionysus's birth, struggles for recognition, and love affairs. Before the birth of the god, Nonnus laments, wine was lacking (*Dion.* 7.7–21). When the youthful Dionysus, with neither instructions nor winepress, squeezed grapes and produced the first vintage, Nonnus gives him the epithet "wine-pouring" or "Bartender Dionysus" (οἰνόχυτος; 12.193–206). Even this modest and somewhat arbitrary selection of texts suggests a strong, fundamental association. Although Dionysus was eventually linked with a variety of human institutions and activities, "[t]hroughout antiquity, he was first and foremost the god of wine and intoxication."⁸ He is never far from wine; it is the most dominant of his provinces.⁹

2. DIONYSIAN WORSHIP IN PTOLEMAIC EGYPT

The cult of Dionysus was extremely popular in the ancient world, being celebrated "from the Black Sea to Egypt and from Asia Minor to southern Italy."¹⁰ In the Hellenistic age the cult of the wine god began

⁷ See Otto, *Dionysus*, 160–70.

⁸ Henrichs, "Dionysius," 479. See also Otto, *Dionysus*, 143–51, and Burkert, *Greek Religion*, 161.

⁹ Hans-Josef Klauck, *The Religious Context of Early Christianity: A Guide to Graeco-Roman Religions* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2003), 108–9.

¹⁰ Antonia Tripolitis, *Religions of the Hellenistic-Roman Age* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002), 22.

to be formally adopted and promoted by the successors to Alexander the Great. This in itself did not precipitate a crisis with Jewish communities in the Diaspora, for Hellenistic rulers were not necessarily bent on the persecution or religious coercion of their Jewish subjects. The first three Ptolemies (Ptolemy I Soter, Ptolemy II Philadelphus, and Ptolemy III Euergetes) apparently “followed the Hellenistic practice of not interfering with the religion of their subjects.”¹¹ Philadelphus did, however, institute a royal cult in 285 BCE, honoring himself and his sister-wife Arsinoë II. About a decade later he also staged an elaborate Dionysian procession, complete with Satyrs, Sileni, drinking vessels, wine-presses, crowns of ivy, and grapes.¹² The institution of the royal cult and the elevation of the Dionysian cult created conditions that would later lead to the crisis under Ptolemy IV Philopator.

Dionysus thus became the family god of the Ptolemies, and Philopator was a particularly enthusiastic follower of the cult.¹³ A fragment from Satyrus, a third-century BCE biographer, offers a fanciful genealogy to show that the Ptolemies descended from Dionysus.¹⁴ In 3 Macc 2:29 Philopator decrees that the Jews must affiliate with the cult of Dionysus by receiving the brand of the ivy leaf, a symbol which frequently accompanies the god in art (cf. 2 Macc 6:7). Philopator himself apparently received the brand of Dionysus. A compendium of ancient etymologies offers the following explanation of the word “Gallos”: “Ptolemy Philopator; because he had been branded with leaves of ivy, as the Galloi. For at the Dionysian mysteries they were always crowned with ivy.”¹⁵ The king’s devotion is further corroborated by an edict that has survived, in which he orders the registration of all officiants of the cult. The edict not only reflects a desire to foster (and regulate) the cult, but

¹¹ W. W. Tarn, *Hellenistic Civilization* (3rd ed.; New York: Meridian, 1952), 212.

¹² P. M. Fraser, *Ptolemaic Alexandria* (3 vols.; London: Oxford University Press, 1972), 1:202 and 2:343. Second Maccabees 6:7 refers to a similar Dionysian procession during the reign of Antiochus IV.

¹³ Adolf Buchler, *Die Tobiaden und die Oniaden* (Hildesheim: Georg Olms, 1975), 197–201. A thorough discussion can be found in Fraser, *Ptolemaic Alexandria*, 1:201–7, 2:342–51. See also F. W. Walbank, “Monarchies and Monarchic Ideas,” in *The Cambridge Ancient History*, 2nd ed. Vol. VII, Part 1, *The Hellenistic World*. (ed. F. W. Walbank et al.; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), 62–100, esp. 85–86.

¹⁴ See Theophilus, *Autol.* 2.7; Robert M. Grant, *Theophilus of Antioch: Ad Autolycom* (London: Oxford University Press, 1970), 32–35; and C. Müller, *Fragmenta Historica Graecorum* (5 vols.; Paris: Didot, 1841–70), 3:164–65.

¹⁵ Thomas Gaisford, ed., *Etymologicon Magnum* (Amsterdam: Adolf M. Hakkert, 1962), 220, lines 19–21. See also Fraser, *Ptolemaic Alexandria*, 2:434, n. 734; and Aryeh Kasher, *The Jews in Hellenistic and Roman Egypt* (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1985), 216 n. 26.

also indicates that the cult had been active in the delta region for at least three generations.

By decree of the king. Persons who perform the rites of Dionysus (τοὺς... τελοῦντας τῷ Διονύσῳ) in the interior shall sail down to Alexandria, those between here and Naucratis within 10 days from the day on which the decree is published and those beyond Naucratis within 20 days, and shall register themselves before Aristobulus at the registration-office within three days from the day on which they arrive, and shall declare forthwith from what persons they have received the transmission of the sacred rites for three generations back and shall hand in the sacred book sealed up, inscribing thereon each his own name.¹⁶

When Philopator came to power in 221, he began a religious reform that merged the royal cult of his predecessors with the Dionysian rites.¹⁷ In addition, Philopator seems to have assumed the policy of syncretism that had been successful in so many other connections. Local and ethnic deities could be identified with various Greek gods and goddesses. Specifically, Philopator “was perhaps deceived by the supposed equation of Sabazios [a Greek or Thracian god often identified with Zeus or other deities] and Sabaoth into believing that the Jews merely worshipped Dionysus under another name and form.”¹⁸ Despite his earnest devotion to the wine god, Philopator badly misjudged Jewish willingness to accommodate pagan worship. The simple act of branding the body violated an explicit biblical command (Leviticus 19:28), and the imposition of a pagan symbol and the adoption of the cult’s practices were anathema to observant Jews.¹⁹

In view of this evidence of Philopator’s vigorous promotion of the cult, “it is not surprising that the king was called ‘the new Dionysus’ by the poet Euphronius, of whom a brief quotation survives.... There are also indications of an iconographical identification of the king and the god.”²⁰ The fact that Ptolemy XII Auletes (fl. 80–58 BCE) also bore

¹⁶ A. S. Hunt and C. C. Edgar, *Select Papyri* (2 vols.; Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1932–34), 2:56, #208 (= BGU 1211). See also Kasher, *The Jews in Hellenistic and Roman Egypt*, 215; Fraser, *Ptolemaic Alexandria*, 1:204 and 2:345–47; and Joseph Meleze Modrzejewski, *The Jews of Egypt: From Rameses II to Emperor Hadrian* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997), 149.

¹⁷ Kasher, *The Jews in Hellenistic and Roman Egypt*, 219.

¹⁸ Tarn, *Hellenistic Civilization*, 212.

¹⁹ Kasher, *The Jews in Hellenistic and Roman Egypt*, 216–17.

²⁰ Fraser, *Ptolemaic Alexandria*, 1:204, 207 and 2.347–48. The quotation does not actually mention Philopator, but the date of Euphronius and certain other factors persuade most scholars to link the reference to him. On the assimilation of Hellenistic

the title “Neos Dionysus” suggests that the cultic foundations laid by Philopator were still intact nearly 150 years later.

3. THE GOD OF WINE IN 3 MACCABEES

It is apparent that Dionysus was intimately associated with both wine and the Ptolemaic dynasty, especially Ptolemy IV Philopator. But is Dionysus more than a passing fancy for the author of 3 Maccabees? As stated above, the god is explicitly mentioned only once (2:29). One might argue from this that we detect only the bouquet of the wine god in 3 Maccabees, and savor nothing of the body. But to minimize the presence of Dionysus in this way is to be led astray by statistics. His name appears but once, yet his intoxicating effects flood the main part of the narrative.

The major episode in 3 Maccabees commences at 2:25 and extends through the last verse (7:23), comprising three quarters of the book. That opening verse contains an example of the language of Dionysian revelry. The narrator refers to Philopator’s συμπόται or “drinking companions,” a word that appears only here in the Septuagint. Closely related vocabulary includes συμπόσιον, “drinking party, symposium” (4:16; 5:36; 6:33), and συμπόσια, “party, banquet” (5:15–17; 7:20). The latter two terms, which are near synonyms, evoke the banquets of the Platonic dialogues. These were convivial gatherings, often of intellectuals, in which wine was the standard beverage, and drunkenness was a possible, but not an inevitable, outcome. The wine consumed in symposia was almost always mixed with water, such that persons who drank “unmixed” wine (ἄκρατος) were regarded as unusually hard drinkers. But not all symposiums were so urbane. When one bears in mind that the word derives from the verb συμπίνω (“to drink with”), it is not surprising that it could denote meetings ranging from the sophisticated gatherings of Socrates and his friends to unrestrained, bacchanalian parties. Philopater’s banquets tended toward the latter end of the spectrum, as is evident from the contextual descriptions.²¹

kings with various gods, especially Dionysus, see Walbank, “Monarchies,” 85–86, and the literature he cites.

²¹ See John Maxwell O’Brien and Barney L. Rickenbacker, “Alcoholism,” *OCD*, 56; and Oswyn Murray, “Symposium,” *OCD*, 1461. See also Oswyn Murray and Manuela Tecusan, eds., *In Vino Veritas* (London: British School at Rome, 1995).

The drinking parties organized by Philopator were more than entertainment; they were religious affairs, given the fact that they were held in honor of Philopator's idols (4:16). Throughout chapter five the king scarcely ceases drinking. After giving the first command to destroy the Jews, the king returns to his feasting (5:3). When the king oversleeps the next morning as a result of divine intervention, the time for the planned destruction slips by. When informed of this fact, what does the king do? He returns to his drinking and urges those present to join him in revelry (5:14–17).

The king reaffirms the genocidal decree for the following day. Early the next morning the king receives his advisors and is astonished to hear about the preparations that have been made. Once again God has thwarted the monarch's plans, this time by inflicting him with memory loss. Philopator is aghast at what he is told. He defends the Jews, excoriates his advisors, and . . . reconvenes the drinking party (5:36). When his mind returns to him, Philopator decrees the destruction of the Jews yet a third time, this time with an irrevocable oath (5:42). The elephants are again provoked with draughts of wine mixed with frankincense. The priest Eleazar prays, and just as the king is arriving at the hippodrome, two glorious angels descend. The fearsome elephants turn back upon the armed forces of the king and trample them.

The only thing in chapter five that matches the king's persistent determination to extinguish the Jews is his equally persistent determination to extinguish his thirst. In his madness Philopator considers the Jews to be the dregs of Egyptian society, and he drinks to the dregs as he schemes their destruction. He is intoxicated with Dionysus in every sense of the word.

In addition to Philopator's frequent indulgence in wine, there is another indication in chapter five that Dionysus is lurking behind the narrative. In 3 Macc 5:45 the narrator says that the elephants are driven into an almost maniacal state, "so to speak" (ὥς εἰπεῖν). The latter inconspicuous phrase was a common way in Greek to qualify an overly strong statement.²² But the phrase may have a different function here, for the adverb "almost" (σχεδόν) adequately softens the expression. Moreover, the elephants are *genuinely* crazed by the wine. There is no need, therefore, for a twofold qualification of the expression. The author

²² Herbert W. Smyth, *Greek Grammar* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1956), 447, §2012b; and LSJ 2039, B.II.3.

is making a thinly veiled allusion. The adjective “maniacal” (μανιώδης) can describe the spirit that animates someone under the influence of Dionysus.²³ Indeed, female devotees of Dionysus were called “Maenads” (μαινάδες), a word that shares the same root as the adjective. There is likely, then, an allusion to the Dionysian cult in 5:45. The elephants, intoxicated with the potion of Dionysus, were driven into the state of Maenads or Bacchantes, “so to speak.”

Lest 3 Maccabees sound like a tract published by an ancient Jewish Temperance Union, we should note that wine and feasting also have a positive function in 3 Maccabees. In effect, all references to wine and feasting in *chapters six and seven* pertain to the celebration of the deliverance of the Jews. For example, upon his remarkable “conversion” the king orders the treasurer to provide wine for the Jews to hold a seven day festival (6:30–36). This festival is explicitly distinguished from the Dionysian revelry so prominent in chapter five. It is “not for the sake of drinking and gluttony” but because of the deliverance that God had effected for them (6:36). Likewise, in the closing verses of the book, the Jews celebrate their deliverance in a joyous festival (7:19). Perhaps the most deliberate rhetorical redemption of drinking vocabulary occurs in 7:18. Here the narrator says that the Jews held “a soteriological drinking party” (ἐποίησαν πότον σωτήριον). This word for “drinking party” was used earlier only at 5:16 (where it referred to the king’s revelry) and 6:36 (where it was explicitly denied as the motive for the Jewish celebrations). Here in 7:18, then, the word is rehabilitated by the adjective σωτήριον, “pertaining to salvation or deliverance.”

4. SLEEP, MEMORY LOSS, RAGE, AND THE GOD OF WINE

The effects of intoxication were well known to the ancients. Indeed, Pliny the Elder, writing in the latter half of the first century CE, gives a list of symptoms that is both perceptive and wide-ranging.

The drunkard never beholds the rising sun, by which his life of drinking is made all the shorter. From wine, too comes that pallid hue, those drooping eyelids, those sore eyes, those tremulous hands, unable to hold with steadiness the overflowing vessel, condign punishment in the shape of sleep agitated by Furies during the restless night, and the supreme

²³ See Euripides, *Bacch.* 299; Nonnus, *Dion.* 21.71, 118; 35.336; 40.243; 43.263; 44.280.

reward of inebriety, those dreams of monstrous lustfulness and of forbidden delights. Then on the next day there is the breath reeking of the wine-cask, and a nearly total obliviousness of everything, from the annihilation of the powers of the memory.²⁴

Pliny's list explicitly cites one of the symptoms seen in 3 Maccabees (memory loss) and alludes to another (oversleeping).²⁵ The third symptom (madness) is covered by Pliny's description of wine as "a liquid which deprives man of his reason and drives him to frenzy and to the commission of a thousand crimes" (*Nat.* 14.28). In the brief survey that follows we will see that Pliny was hardly alone in his recognition and criticism of the abuse of wine.

A. *Dionysus/Wine and Sleep*

In 3 Macc 5:11 Philopator's murderous intent is first thwarted by "a portion of sleep" sent from God. Sleep was generally considered a divine gift by both biblical and classical authors (Ps 126:2 LXX; Plutarch, *Superst.* 166B–C; Seneca, *Herc. fur.* 1065–81). Euripides positively associates wine with both sleep and forgetfulness: "[Dionysus] invented the liquid draft of the grape and introduced it to mortals. When they get their fill of the flowing grape, it gives wretched mortals rest from their grief. It gives them sleep and forgetfulness of daily sorrows. There is no other medicine for toil" (*Bacch.* 279–83).

But wine also benumbs the mind and induces sleep in harmful ways. Odysseus famously overpowered the Cyclops by bringing him three large drafts of wine and then blinding him after he had fallen asleep (Homer, *Od.* 9.360–74). Seneca tells of Roman officials whose careers were marked by wine-induced slumber. Lucius Piso, the guardian of the city under Augustus, "was drunk from the very time of his appointment. He used to spend the greater part of the night at banquets, and would sleep until noon. That was the way he spent his morning hours." Similarly, Cossus, a city prefect, was "so soaked and steeped in drink that once, at a meeting of the Senate, whither he had come after banqueting, he was overcome by a slumber from which he could not

²⁴ Pliny the Elder, *Nat.* 14.28. Translation from John Bostock and H. T. Riley, *The Natural History of Pliny* (London: H. G. Bohn, 1855–57).

²⁵ There is no contradiction between oversleeping and insomnia, both of which are reflected in Pliny's list. Drunkards party until late in the night, alcohol thus disturbing their normal sleep, but then they sleep through the morning hours, never beholding the rising sun. Cf. 1 Thess 5:7.

be roused, and had to be carried home.”²⁶ The harmful, sleep-inducing effect of wine was widely known in antiquity.²⁷

On the other hand, wine in moderation might assist one in falling asleep without necessarily stupefying the person the next morning. When the Roman general Papirius was accused of overindulgence in wine, he defended himself, saying, “That I am not a drunkard is clear to everyone from the fact that I both rise in the morning very early and retire at night very late. But because day and night alike I am always concerned about our common affairs and because I am not easily able to fall asleep, I drink wine when I am preparing to go to sleep” (Dio Cassius, *Hist.* 8.36.23).

The biblical tradition outside 3 Maccabees knows of the connection between wine and sleep. Noah’s overindulgence led to his well-known overexposure (Gen 9:20–23), a tradition commented on by Josephus (*Ant.* 1.140–41). Holofernes, the Babylonian general, became utterly drunk, fell asleep, and was beheaded by Judith (Jdt 12:16–13:10). Nabal’s drunkenness made him largely incommunicado to Abigail until he had slept it off (1 Sam 25:36–37). Prophetic oracles of judgment also associate drunkenness with sleep (Jer 51:39, 57; Joel 1:5).

When these literary witnesses are combined with widespread human experience, it is more than likely that the author of 3 Maccabees intended a connection between Philopator’s drinking and the divine infliction of sleep. The fact that drunkenness per se is never mentioned is irrelevant. In fact, explicit inebriation would undercut the author’s point, for Philopator’s slumber is not simply the natural result of intoxication. It is divine intervention, the God of Israel thwarting the evil scheme of a devotee of Dionysus. In the contest of deities the maxim proves true: you snooze, you lose.

B. *Dionysus/Wine and Memory Loss*

Lucian, the second-century CE satirist, quotes a poetic adage: “I hate a drinking companion with a good memory” (*Symp.* 3). The concern, of course, is that such a companion would recall the reckless revelations and outrageous behavior from the night before. In actual practice this

²⁶ Seneca, *Ep.* 83.14–15. Translation by Richard M. Gummere, *Seneca: Epistles* 66–92 (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1920), 267.

²⁷ Aristotle, *Somm. vig.* 457A; Theognis, *Eleg.* 469–70; Philostratus, *Vit. Apoll.* 2.36; Nonnus, *Dion.* 15.167–68.

was seldom a problem. The more realistic adage would have been: “the more one imbibes the sauce, the greater the chance of memory loss.”

Philopator experiences a timely stroke of amnesia in 3 Macc 5:26–28, a development attributed to the working of God, who had afflicted Philopator with “forgetfulness” (λήθη) of his previously devised schemes. Forgetfulness is personified in classical mythology as the god Lethe (Hesiod, *Theog.* 227), which also serves as the name of a river in the underworld whose waters make those who drink them forget the past.

There is a logical link between the two means used to frustrate Philopator’s plans: sleep and loss of memory. Sleep, as a lessened state of consciousness, is a kind of forgetfulness. In a waking state one does not always remember one’s dreams (Homer, *Il.* 2.33–34). More importantly, there are literary links, as we saw in the case of sleep, between forgetfulness with the excessive consumption of wine. Although the ancients obviously lacked a modern scientific understanding of alcoholism, human experience had acquainted them with alcoholic blackouts and wine-impaired memories.

A guest in one of Plutarch’s symposiums correctly understood the cause/effect relationship when he mused, “It seems to me that the ancients were wrong in calling Dionysus the child of Forgetfulness (Λήθη), for he ought to be called her father” (*Quaest. conv.* 705B). Elsewhere Plutarch remarks that “they dedicate to Dionysus the [ceremonial] cane along with forgetfulness, since one ought not to remember the mistakes made while drinking.”²⁸

In a symposium reported by Xenophon, Socrates doubts whether the virtue of caution can be taught. Ischomachus acknowledges that, indeed, not all persons can be taught caution, and he gives as a primary example, those who lack self-control with regard to wine. These cannot be taught caution because drunkenness causes forgetfulness of the things one ought to do (Xenophon, *Oec.* 12.11). This same sentiment is reflected in a medieval agricultural guide that urged that the person entrusted with the care of a farm should “abstain from wine as much as possible, for drinking of much wine causes forgetfulness.”²⁹ On the other hand, there may be things that one *wants* to forget, and in such

²⁸ Plutarch, Fragment 128. See F. H. Sandbach, *Plutarch’s Moralia*, Vol. 15 (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1969), 242–45.

²⁹ *Geoponica* 2.44. The *Geoponica* is a medieval collection, but many of its instructions may date to antiquity.

a case wine can be viewed as a gift from Dionysus. Plato remarks that wine is an ally against the harshness of old age, a medicine by which the aged may return to their youth and the disposition of the soul may become gentler through the forgetfulness (λήθη) of despair (Plato, *Leg.* 666A).

Again, the author of 3 Maccabees has probably not chosen amnesia at random. It is a sort of punishment that is especially apt for Philopator, whose god Dionysus often impairs the memory. By the intervention of Israel's God, then, the genocidal scheme escapes Philopator, and the Jews escape destruction a second time.

C. *Dionysus/Wine and Rage*

Philopator's third weakness as a follower of Dionysus is rage. It does not directly thwart his plan to destroy the Jews as sleep and forgetfulness did, but it is a consistent characteristic of him in 3 Maccabees, particularly in chapter five. In 3 Macc 3:1 the king is "exceedingly angry" (ἐχόλησεν); in 5:1 he is "filled with oppressive wrath and anger" (cf. 5:30, 47). In 5:20 and 42 Philopator is likened to Phalaris, a Sicilian tyrant of the sixth century BCE. Phalaris became a byword in antiquity for savagery because of his reputation for fiendish torture (Cicero, *Off.* 2.7.26; *Att.* 7.12.2). In particular, he would roast people alive in a hollow brazen bull so that the screams of the victims would make the bull bellow realistically (Polybius 12.25; Diodorus Siculus 9.19.1; Lucian, *Phal.* 1.11–12). The author of 3 Maccabees has rhetorically pulled out all the stops in characterizing Philopator as maniacal. Finally, the rage of the elephants should not be overlooked. In 5:2 they are "driven wild" by an abundance of "unmixed wine" (οἶνον πλείονι ἀκράτῳ), and in 5:45, as pointed out above, they were brought to a state of maenad-like madness. In a sense, the madness of the elephants indirectly thwarts the planned destruction of the Jews since their violent rage is turned back on the king's forces by the intervention of the angels (6:21).

In all this Philopator and the elephants are acting out the character of their deity. Walter Otto observes that "[Dionysus] is explicitly characterized as 'the raging one,' 'the mad one'; the nature of the maenads, from which they get their name, is, therefore, his nature. . . . Dionysus is the god who is mad."³⁰ Madness is so associated with Dionysus that it

³⁰ Otto, *Dionysus*, 135. See also Plutarch, *E Delph.* 389B; Achilles Tatius, *Leuc. Clit.* 2.3.3; and Diodorus Siculus 5.50.4–5.

becomes an epithet of the god: “raving (μαϊνόμενος) Dionysus” (Homer, *Il.* 6.132). “The majority of people call Dionysus ‘the mad one’ because those who imbibe much unmixed wine become raucous” (Athenaeus, *Deipn.* 14.613A). Seneca referred to drunkenness as “voluntary insanity” (*Ep.* 83.18). The sage Apollonius made a similar connection: “The thinking of those who are drunk is disturbed and in a state of madness” (Philostratus, *Vit. Apoll.* 2:36).

The violent ruler is virtually a literary type in antiquity. In the biblical tradition one thinks of Pharoah or Herod the Great. In some cases the violence was fueled by intoxication. Herodotus reports that King Cambyses was criticized by the Persians for an excessive devotion to wine, which allegedly had driven him out of his mind. In an ironic (and most likely unsuccessful) attempt to refute the charge, Cambyses flew into a rage and killed the son of his courtier Prexaspes with an arrow.³¹ In the Hellenistic age Alexander the Great became a prime example of explosive rage, a weakness perhaps aggravated by heavy drinking. In a particularly famous incident Alexander murdered his friend Cleitus in the middle of a hard-drinking symposium. Cleitus, himself in a drunken state, imprudently insulted Alexander, belittled his achievements, and bragged that Alexander owed his life to him. Alexander seized a nearby weapon and slew his friend. Arrian opines that, while Cleitus was primarily to blame for the incident because of his hubristic behavior, Alexander was overcome by twin vices: wrath and drunkenness (ὀργή τε καὶ παρηνία).³²

Proverbs 31:4 warns against the combination of alcohol and authority. The Septuagint version of that verse sharpens the point somewhat: “Rulers are *prone to anger*, so let them not drink wine.” Similar warnings are issued in Prov 12:11; 20:1; 23:20, 30; Sir 31:30; and Isa 28:7.

I have reserved until last the citation of several texts that are especially significant. The writings of Philo are particularly relevant as comparative texts to 3 Maccabees for three reasons: Philo was Jewish, an Alexandrian, and (perhaps) a near contemporary to the author of 3 Maccabees.³³ It is noteworthy, then, that Philo seems more than a

³¹ Herodotus 3.34–35. See William V. Harris, *Restraining Rage: The Ideology of Anger Control in Classical Antiquity* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2001), 230–31.

³² Arrian 4.8–9; and Harris, *Restraining Rage*, 235–36. In general, see Harris’s chapter on “Restraining the Angry Ruler,” 229–63.

³³ The date of 3 Maccabees is difficult to determine with any precision. In my commentary I suggested a possible range from 100 BCE to 50 CE. See Croy, *3 Maccabees*,

little bit concerned about drunkenness. It is a major issue in two of his writings, *De Plantatione* and *De Ebrietate*, and comes up often in other works.

From Philo we learn that those who drink to excess are prone to violent and insolent acts; they are wakeful during the night for the indulgence of immoderate appetites, and they sleep by day when it is the proper time to be awake (*Cher.* 92–93). Such people become intoxicated but continue drinking; they become angry if their cupbearers delay (*Plant.* 160). Men in authority (μεγάλοι) drink large quantities of strong wine, become drunk, and then violently abuse slaves and free men alike, at times even whole cities (*Virt.* 162). Consumption of too much strong drink leads to violence, destructive acts, and even bodily mutilation (*Contempl.* 40–42). In general, wine inflames and breeds insolence (*Ebr.* 95; *Flacc.* 136).

The most remarkable text in Philo, however, is *Spec.* 1.98–99. Here Philo hands on commandments concerning priestly functions. Whenever the priests approach the altar to perform sacrifices “they should drink neither wine nor any other strong drink, on account of four very compelling reasons: sluggishness, forgetfulness, sleep, and folly” (ὄκνου καὶ λήθης καὶ ὕπνου καὶ ἀφροσύνης). Philo goes on to explain that wine relaxes both the powers of the body, leading to sluggishness and sleep, and the energies of the soul, leading to forgetfulness and folly. Although Philo’s list is strictly fourfold, his concerns are, in spirit and essence, identical to the three weaknesses of Philopator and his god in 3 Maccabees.

CONCLUSION

The means by which Philopator’s genocidal scheme is foiled in 3 Maccabees are by no means randomly chosen. The author, in keeping with the classical tradition, knows that Dionysus is first and foremost the god of wine and intoxication. In keeping with both the classical and biblical traditions (not to mention human experience), the author knows that excessive consumption of wine leads to drowsiness and sleep, loss of memory, and manic rage. These are the very liabilities of worshipping the god Dionysus, so the narrator crafts a satirical

xi–xiii. A date in the last third of that range would make 3 Maccabees roughly contemporary with Philo.

story in which the god's weaknesses bring about the downfall of his devotee, Philopator.

G. W. F. Hegel said, "It is the nature of the finite to have within its essence the seeds of its own destruction." The author of 3 Maccabees would probably agree: the inherent qualities of Dionysus are simultaneously his inherent weaknesses. Devotion to Dionysus wearies the body (sleep), vitiates the mind (memory loss), and unhinges the spirit (rage). Contrariwise, the Deliverer of Israel (7:23), who is infinite, preserves the Jews, body, mind, and spirit, while simultaneously spoofing the god of wine.

JEWISH IDENTITY AND HELLENISM IN THE FRAGMENTARY JEWISH WRITINGS IN GREEK

Lester L. Grabbe

Carl Holladay's main scholarly achievement—in my eyes, at least—is his magnificent edition of the Fragmentary Jewish Writings in Greek. Of the many Jewish writings from the Second Temple Period, this collection is certainly one of the most neglected. It is therefore with considerable pleasure that I dedicate to Carl this essay making use of these writings.

One of the questions that seems to have been debated endlessly is how the Jews saw themselves under Greek rule. One might wonder why this should be—surely the question of identity would have been asked when the rulers were Persian or Babylonian or Assyrian. But the oft-unstated assumption seems to be that Greek rule was somehow different from any that had preceded it. Given this assumption, the question of Hellenism must also be included in any discussion of Jewish identity of this period. In the present study I shall consider both these questions—of (1) Jewish identity and (2) the Jews and Hellenism—in the Fragmentary Jewish Writings in Greek, with particular attention to Demetrius, Artapanus, Ezekiel the Tragedian, Eupolemus, and Aristobulus. (In the discussion that follows, the text of the writers comes mainly from Eusebius, *Praeparatio Evangelica*, but also Clement of Alexandria, *Stromata*.)

DEMETRIUS

As probably the earliest writing of this collection, perhaps in the late third century BCE (since he calculates his chronology to the reign of Ptolemy IV; Clement of Alexandria, *Strom.* 1.21.141.1–2), Demetrius is of particular interest.¹ Most of his work—as far as the extant remains allow us to determine it—seems to have been an attempt to sort out

¹ Carl R. Holladay, *Fragments from Hellenistic Jewish Authors, Volume I: Historians* (Texts and Translations 20, Pseudepigrapha Series 10; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1983), 51–52.

potential difficulties and apparent contradictions in the text and also to provide a chronological framework; hence, he is often referred to as “Demetrius the Chronographer.” Some of the main issues he deals with include:

The “chronology” of the life of Jacob, including the time of birth of his various children (*Praep. ev.* 9.21.1–13).

Why Benjamin received five-fold the presents of the other sons of Jacob (*Praep. ev.* 9.21.14–15).

A chronology of the patriarchs from Abraham to Moses, along with a reckoning of the time from Adam to Abraham (*Praep. ev.* 9.21.16–19).

The genealogies of Moses and Zipporah are synchronized, showing why Moses was the seventh from Abraham but Zipporah only the sixth (*Praep. ev.* 9.29.1–3).

How Zipporah could be called an “Ethiopian woman” (*Praep. ev.* 9.29.3).

How the Israelites obtained weapons, though leaving Egypt unarmed, is explained (*Praep. ev.* 9.29.16).

The time between the captivities of the Northern Kingdom and Jerusalem is reckoned, and then the time from these two captivities to the reign of Ptolemy IV (Clement, *Strom.* 1.21.141.1–2).

Demetrius’s concern to sort out contradictions appears to demonstrate two things about Jewish identity: first, it shows a self-conscious desire to maintain the integrity of Jewish scripture against possible criticism and skepticism from outsiders and puzzlement or disillusion among fellow Jews. Second, this sort of defense makes sense only if the Jewish writing being dealt with (the book of Genesis) is conceived of as in some way authoritative or scripture. Jewish identity was already starting to include the presence of sacred writings, and the Jews were starting to become the people of a book. Also, at least some of the chronological data are derived from the biblical text, especially those relating to the births of Jacob’s children. If the dating is correct, Demetrius becomes one of the first Jewish writers outside the biblical text itself to attest the scripture consciousness that became very evident at a later time.

The reason for Demetrius’s concern about chronology can be explained in various ways. It might have been, at least in part, an intellectual exercise to better understand the text. In other words, it might have formed one of the earliest commentaries on the biblical text. But calculations of the age of the world were often associated with eschatological expectations in the late Second Temple period.² Whether this was

² Lester L. Grabbe, “Chronography in Hellenistic Jewish Historiography,” in *Society of Biblical Literature 1979 Seminar Papers* (ed. P. J. Achtemeier; SBLSPS 17; Missoula, Mont.: Scholars Press, 1979), 2:43–68.

the case here is not indicated, but it would be interesting if this practice was found already this early. Apocalyptic certainly had its roots in the Persian period and was a full-blown reality by Demetrius's time.³

EZEKIEL THE TRAGEDIAN

One of the most remarkable works to come out of Jewish antiquity was the tragedy, "The Exodus," by an unknown author named Ezekiel (though he is alleged to have composed other tragedies, hence "Ezekiel the Tragedian"). A recent study dates it between the middle of the third century and middle of the first century BCE.⁴ For the most part the work is a paraphrase of the account in the biblical book of Exodus. There are definite signs of use of a text like that of the Old Greek or Septuagint.⁵ At the end of the preserved extracts, there is a remarkable passage on the fabulous phoenix bird, a reference found in no extant biblical manuscript or version of Exodus.

A Jewish author has composed a Greek drama on a tragic theme as was traditional among Greek tragedians, showing a good command of the Greek language. In this case, though, instead of using a legend or an actual event from Hellenic history, he has chosen a Jewish theme, the exodus from Egypt. This would seem to make a lot of sense: why should not a Jewish writer use Jewish history or tradition for his play? After all, Aeschylus could write about an event of recent Greek history, the Persian wars, and not just traditional themes. Yet the Ἑξαγωγή is in fact very unusual in the history of drama. What it shows is a Jewish self-confidence in the ancestral tradition but also a thorough knowledge of Greek language and forms, and a willingness to use them to treat a Jewish subject, presumably for fellow Jews (but see below) who could understand the Greek language and Greek dramatic forms. Ezekiel is thoroughly familiar with Euripides, Aeschylus, Sophocles, Homer, and

³ Lester L. Grabbe, *A History of the Jews and Judaism in the Second Temple Period 1: Yehud: A History of the Persian Province of Judah* (London/New York: T & T Clark, 2004), 250–52.

⁴ Pierluigi Lanfranchi, *L'Exagoge d'Ezéchiel le Tragique: Introduction, texte, traduction et commentaire* (SVTP 21; Leiden: Brill, 2006), 10.

⁵ Carl R. Holladay, *Fragments from Hellenistic Jewish Authors, Volume II: Poets: The Epic Poets Theodotus and Philo and Ezekiel the Tragedian* (Texts and Translations 30, Pseudepigrapha Series 12; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1989), 313, 326 nn. 37–38.

Herodotus, and he is quite competent in metrification. He evidently had a good education in Greek.⁶

Attendance at theaters and public spectacles is an interesting issue in light of Ezekiel's literary output.⁷ Such activities are castigated by some Jewish writers, with the suggestion that it is un-Jewish and contrary to the law (for example, Josephus, *Ant.* 15.268–76), yet Philo of Alexandria, a pious and faithful Jew, clearly attended such public entertainment (*Ebr.* 177; *Prob.* 141). The issue is somewhat difficult because the theater and its productions had a religious context, but it seems evident that some Jews did not find this a problem. Also, it is possible that the Jews had their own theater in some cases.

ARTAPANUS

One of the most curious Jewish writers of the Second Temple period is Artapanus. Exactly when he wrote is uncertain: he could be as early as the third century BCE, but the reign of Ptolemy VI (180–145 BCE) is suggested as the most likely time.⁸ Here are some of the main points in his story:

Abraham taught astrology to the Egyptians (*Praep. ev.* 9.18.1).

Joseph was the first to divide the land of Egypt geometrically and provide boundaries (*Praep. ev.* 9.23.2).

Moses created a number of technological inventions and cultural contributions, including philosophy, and assigned the gods to be worshiped by the Egyptians (*Praep. ev.* 9.27.4).

Moses became the general of the Egyptian army and defeated the Ethiopians (*Praep. ev.* 9.27.7–12).

Moses was beloved by the Ethiopians, even though he was their enemy (*Praep. ev.* 9.27.10).

Moses introduced circumcision to the Ethiopians and Egyptian priests (*Praep. ev.* 9.27.10).

Raguel (Moses's father-in-law) campaigned against the Egyptians (*Praep. ev.* 9.27.19).

Moses was miraculously released from prison after being put there by Pharaoh (*Praep. ev.* 9.27.23–25; Clement, *Strom.* 1.23.154.2–3).

The Egyptians set up a rod in every temple because Moses used his rod to produce frogs, locusts, and fleas from the earth (*Praep. ev.* 9.27.32).

⁶ Ibid., 303, 328–29 n. 44.

⁷ Lanfranchi, *L'Exagoge d'Ezéchiel le Tragique*, 39–56.

⁸ Holladay, *Fragments from Hellenistic Jewish Authors, Volume I: Historians*, 189–90.

Artapanus is often seen as different from other Jewish writers in his apparent tolerance toward paganism. Granted, he is not afraid to use pagan motifs, such as his making Moses responsible for creating the Egyptian gods and worship. Yet his aim appears to be the same as some of the others considered here: a special concern to make the Jews intellectually equal (or even superior) to others. According to Artapanus, Abraham, Joseph, and Moses were all responsible for introducing some of the achievements and innovations that were traditionally assumed to be Egyptian inventions. Moses himself is very much a heroic figure: a great general who is not only outstanding militarily but also arouses love even among his enemies, a cultural innovator, enjoying miracles performed on his behalf by God, and even the object of worship by the Egyptians. But it is not just Moses who is heroic, outstanding as he is. For example, in Artapanus Moses's father-in-law Raguel is not an insignificant figure living in the Sinai wilderness but a formidable power able to match strength with that of Pharaonic Egypt. All of this creates a heritage for the Jews of which they can be proud and hold up their heads even alongside the supposed oldest and most cultured of nations.

The charge of compromising with paganism—like so many modern interpretations—is based on preconceived ideas about being a “proper Jew.” In fact, Artapanus demonstrates the variety of approaches to Greco-Roman culture by Jews. Holladay makes the important observation that Artapanus has a tendency toward “euhemerism.”⁹ Euhemerus (c. 300 BCE) wrote a story about a voyage to some islands with a utopian society, in which the local gods (with Greek names) were originally kings who were promoted to divine status and worshiped by the people after their death (Diodorus Siculus 6.1). Although the idea was not widespread among Greeks, the Jews latched on to it as an explanation for pagan worship, and it appears in a number of Jewish writings (for example, *Let. Aris.* 135). Holladay seems to be right that Artapanus is actually downgrading the Egyptian deities by explaining their worship as having been a human invention—by no less than the one who led the Jews out of Egypt.

⁹ Ibid., 193.

EUPOLEMUS

We may know more about Eupolemus than most of the other Jewish writers in this survey. There is a wide consensus that he was the Eupolemus, son of John and member of an important priestly family, who was sent on a mission to establish relations with Rome and allegedly even spoke in the Roman senate (1 Macc 8:17–20; 2 Macc 4:11).¹⁰ This would date the writing to about the middle of the second century BCE. Thus, we have a member of the Jerusalem aristocracy and temple priesthood with a Greek name and knowledge of Greek. His Greek has some flaws, suggesting that it is his second (or third) language after, presumably, Aramaic and Hebrew. Here are some of the main points from the fragments of his writing:

Moses taught the alphabet to the Jews who passed it on to the Phoenicians and from there to the Greeks (*Praep. ev.* 9.26.1//Clement, *Strom.* 1.23.153.4).

Moses was the first to write down laws (*Praep. ev.* 9.26.1).

David subdued the Syrians on the Euphrates, the Assyrians in Galadene, and the Phoenicians, and fought against the Idumeans, Ammonites, Moabites, Itureans, and Nabateans (*Praep. ev.* 9.30.3–4).

David commissioned ships in “Elana” (Ezion-geber) and brought gold from Ophir (*Praep. ev.* 9.30.7).

Pharaoh Vaphres sent 80,000 men to help build the Jerusalem temple (*Praep. ev.* 9.32.1).

King Souron of Tyre sent 80,000 men to help build the temple (*Praep. ev.* 9.34.2).

Solomon included a bird scarer on the temple to keep birds from polluting it (*Praep. ev.* 9.34.11).

When Nebuchadnezzar heard about Jeremiah’s prophecies, he allied with Astibares king of the Medes to take Samaria, Galilee, Gilead, and finally Jerusalem, and captured “Jonacheim” (*Praep. ev.* 9.39.4–5).

Jeremiah was allowed to retain the ark (of the covenant) and the tablets of the law (*Praep. ev.* 9.39.5).

The time from Adam to the Seleucid king Demetrius (I?) was 5149 years (Clement, *Strom.* 1.21.141.4).

From the remains of Eupolemus’s writing, it appears that one of his aims was one shared with other “rewritten Bible” productions: to clarify and amplify the biblical text. A number of his fragments seem to be a paraphrase of the biblical text but with new details and expansions in

¹⁰ Ibid., 93.

certain areas. The evidence suggests that he used both a Hebrew and a Greek text.¹¹ The clarification and amplification looks very much like that seen elsewhere: to show how the Jews were equal or even superior to other nations and peoples. For example, David's conquests are made much greater and more glorious than in the Bible, and the help to build the temple that Solomon receives from the surrounding peoples is enormous, perhaps as a way of emphasizing what a glorious building the temple was. The accounts of both Kings and Chronicles are combined, but Chronicles with its greater detail seems to be emphasized.

Some other points call for comment. The bird scarer on the temple is an addition to the text, but other Jewish writers show concern to prevent contamination of the temple by birds. For example, the *Temple Scroll* (11QT 46:1–4//11Q20 12:15–17) mentions a device for preventing unclean birds from settling on the temple, though this is in a broken context, and the description is not very clear. It seems to me that there is reason to suspect that a means of keeping birds off the roof was a feature of the Second Temple. If so, Eupolemus is not deriving this particular feature from the biblical text but from his own knowledge of the contemporary temple. The tradition that Jeremiah took charge of the ark of the covenant after the temple was destroyed is also found in 2 Macc 2:4–5. This was probably a way of mitigating the implications that God allowed the ark to be taken by the Babylonians as spoil.

Finally, Eupolemus also tries to calculate the age of the world, which might carry eschatological implications as already discussed. I have argued elsewhere that the final redactor of the book of Daniel was an educated individual who not only knew Greek but had access to writing about Hellenistic history—someone like Eupolemus.¹² It would not be unusual for an educated Jew like Eupolemus to have eschatological beliefs and expectations.

ARISTOBULUS

We are told that Aristobulus was a Peripatetic, that is, a follower of the Aristotelean school of philosophy. The preserved fragments are greatly

¹¹ Ibid., 95, 100–101 nn. 14–15.

¹² Lester L. Grabbe, "A Dan(iel) for All Seasons: For Whom Was Daniel Important?" in *The Book of Daniel: Composition and Reception* (ed. J. J. Collins and P. W. Flint; The Formation and Interpretation of Old Testament Literature 2; VTSup 83; Leiden: Brill, 2001), 1:229–46.

reminiscent of Philo of Alexandria. According to traditions preserved about him, he was teacher of Ptolemy VI; this dating, if not some of the other allegations about him, has been widely accepted.¹³ This would date Aristobulus, like Artapanus, to the middle of the second century BCE. Some of Aristobulus's main points are as follows:

The method of determining the date of Passover is discussed, Aristobulus being quoted among others (*Hist. eccl.* 7.32.14–19).

The use of allegory and other figures of speech is explained by Aristobulus (*Praep. ev.* 8.9.38–10.18).

The Greeks (specifically named are Plato and Pythagoras) took information from the Jewish law which had been translated before the time of Alexander (*Praep. ev.* 9.6.6–8 // *Praep. ev.* 13.11.3–12.2 // Clement, *Strom.* 1.22.150.1–3).

The “divine voice” has to be understood figuratively as God’s creative acts (*Praep. ev.* 13.12.3).

Pythagoras, Socrates, and Plato appear to have followed Moses (*Praep. ev.* 13.12.4 // 13.13.21 // Clement, *Strom.* 5.14.99.3).

Orpheus writes about (the Jewish) God in his verses (*Praep. ev.* 13.12.4–5). Aratus likewise writes about God on similar lines [a genuine quote, though “Zeus” has been changed to “God” throughout] (*Praep. ev.* 13.12.6–7).

Not just the Hebrews but also the Greeks recognize the seventh day as sacred: Solon, Homer, Hesiod, Linus [a legendary figure like Orpheus] (*Praep. ev.* 13.12.13–16 // 13.13.34–35 // Clement, *Strom.* 5.14.107.1–4; 5.14.108.1; 6.16.144.3).

Among the implications of Aristobulus’s writing(s) are that the Jewish religious practices are universal: even the sabbath was recognized by the Greeks, not least by early and important figures like Homer, Hesiod, and Solon. Thus, by implication the Jews are right to maintain these traditions and reject any criticisms of them.¹⁴ Another point is that allegory is an important way of understanding the Scriptures. Although Aristobulus does not point out (and perhaps did not realize) that his allegory was likely to have been borrowed from the Greeks, it was clear that Jewish allegory of the Bible and Greek allegory of Homer were a shared intellectual activity.¹⁵ Our knowledge of Jewish allegorical

¹³ Carl R. Holladay, *Fragments from Hellenistic Jewish Authors, Volume III: Aristobulus* (Texts and Translations 39; Pseudepigrapha Series 13; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1995), 45–75.

¹⁴ Keeping of the sabbath was one of the most frequent negative comments made about Jews (e.g., Aristarchus of Cnidus, apud Josephus, *Ag. Ap.* 1.210–11).

¹⁵ Lester L. Grabbe, *Etymology in Early Jewish Interpretation: The Hebrew Names in Philo* (Brown Judaic Studies 115; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1988), 49–87.

interpretation of the Bible is best known from Philo of Alexandria (ca. 20 BCE to ca. 50 CE), but Aristobulus makes it clear that the practice was far older than Philo.

An interesting aspect of Aristobulus's work is his citation of Greek writings. Some of these appear to have come via Jewish media such as the verses of Pseudo-Orpheus.¹⁶ One citation from Hesiod (*Praep. ev.* 13.12.13, first quotation) is accurate, though he has misinterpreted it. A second quotation from Hesiod (second quotation in *Praep. ev.* 13.12.13) is not attested in the extant text of Hesiod, though it has "Hesiodic echoes." His quotations from Homer (*Praep. ev.* 13.12.14) are more problematic: one appears based on Homer (*Od.* 5.262), though Aristobulus has "the seventh day" (and connects it with the sabbath) where Homer seems to have had "the fourth day"; the others are unknown in Homer but may not necessarily be Jewish inventions.¹⁷ Also, Aristobulus quotes the beginning of Aratus's poem, *Phaenomena* (lines 1–18), again accurately (except for his acknowledged changing of "Zeus" to "God" [θεός]). Although his knowledge of Greek literature should not be pressed (since he may have acquired some of it second hand through Jewish sources), all the information that we have on Aristobulus suggests a well educated man who had knowledge of Greek literature and culture. Whether he was literally the teacher of Ptolemy VI as alleged seems unlikely, but he may well have dedicated a work to the young Ptolemy that would give him the designation of "teacher of the king."¹⁸

DISCUSSION

In discussing these writers we have to keep in mind that they come from different periods and probably represent different geographical origins. Nevertheless, they are all from the Hellenistic world and all seem evidently to be Jews. Furthermore, there are a number of themes common to two or more writers, while some writers raise important single issues that do not occur elsewhere. Some of the common themes are:

¹⁶ On this Jewish writing, in several recensions, see Carl R. Holladay, *Fragments from Hellenistic Jewish Authors, Volume IV: Orphica* (Texts and Translations 40; Pseudepigrapha Series 14; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1996).

¹⁷ Holladay, *Fragments from Hellenistic Jewish Authors, Volume III: Aristobulus*, 235–36 nn. 155–58).

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 46, 75, 78 n. 4.

1. The Jews were the innovators in cultural and intellectual pursuits. Other great and ancient nations (for example, the Egyptians and Phoenicians), as well as the Greeks, had borrowed these innovations (without acknowledging the origins is the implication). In an example of euhemerism, Artapanus even claimed that the Egyptian gods and worship were established by Moses.
2. Famous Greek poets and philosophers (Homer, Hesiod, Plato, Pythagoras, and others) agreed with Hebrew writers or even borrowed from them, especially from Moses. Aristobulus even goes so far as to suggest how this might have happened: by Greek translations of the Jewish scriptures even before the Septuagint, a claim for which there is no evidence.
3. The Fragmentary Writers all identify with the Jewish sacred writings and attempt to clarify, justify, reconcile, and embellish its account: the people that they represent were clearly becoming a “people of the book.” In some cases, the focus is on Moses as a culture hero, general, leader, and miracle worker, but Aristobulus emphasizes Moses as lawgiver, while Eupolemus makes Moses the first to write down law even if his primary focus is on the temple. This elevation of a sacred book to a primary religious symbol differs from the conventional view in which Judaism always focused on the Torah; on the contrary, it is clear that Judaism initially focused on the temple and only gradually made the Bible its center, but this process is likely to have begun in the Diaspora.¹⁹
4. These writings show authors who are at home in the Greek language and in Greek culture. Greek seems to be the first language of all but Eupolemus, but all were thoroughly Jewish and probably had primarily a Jewish audience. One could argue that the attempt to defend Judaism by elevating figures like Abraham and Moses to superhuman status shows a lack of self-confidence. It may indeed be that some writers were more confident in their religious and ethnic identity than others, but in none of the extant fragments of these writers is there any indication of hostility to Greek culture and the Greek world as such.

¹⁹ Lester L. Grabbe, *Judaic Religion in the Second Temple Period: Belief and Practice from the Exile to Yavneh* (London/New York: Routledge, 2000), 148–49, 178–82, 318, 328–30; idem, *A History of the Jews and Judaism in the Second Temple Period 1: Yehud: A History of the Persian Province of Judah*, 331–44.

5. The question of Greek theater for Jews is a complex one but has important implications for Jewish existence in the Diaspora. Attendance at theaters and public spectacles is frowned on by some Jewish writers, yet there is clear evidence that some Jews frequented them.²⁰ Some modern writers have been quick to condemn this without considering the historical circumstances and context. What Jews did and did not do is not a matter for modern judgment but simply one of historical description. It gives us hints about the boundaries of Judaism as seen by a variety of Jews. To use terms like “syncretistic” or “apostate” or even “compromise” is to substitute theology for historical inquiry. Our job is not to judge what was “proper” but to describe what actually happened in the Jewish community in the Second Temple period. The practice of Judaism seems to have been more of a “broad church” than some have wanted to recognize.

CONCLUSIONS

The Fragmentary Jewish Writings in Greek represent a rich seam of material that has been little studied up to the present. The fact that the writings have not been preserved in their entirety makes use of them more difficult, but it should not prevent our employment of them alongside other sources. What these writers show is evidence of Jews at home in the Greek world. Like other native peoples they wish to assert their antiquity and equality or even superiority, but they are no different from the Egyptians (Manetho) or Babylonians (Berossus) who argued that their civilization was much older than and superior to that of the Greeks. These writers were native speakers of Greek (with the probable exception of Eupolemus) and expressed themselves in Greek language and Greek literary conventions for the most part. Most important, not one of them shows any hostility to the Hellenic world or culture—not even Eupolemus. They are not afraid to defend the Jewish religion and law, but in doing so they do not show any fear of contamination from the Greek society around them. In our extant sources, only a few individuals are said to have abandoned their ancestral religion, and this charge might have been a matter of personal opinion in some cases. The issue of Jewish attendance at the theater

²⁰ Lanfranchi, *L'Exagoge d'Ezéchiel le Tragique*, 39–46.

and other public exhibitions illustrates that Jews were able to come to terms with the relationship between their Hellenistic environment and their religion. They seem to be content to live a life that combined both Jewish customs and identity and also Greek language and participation in Hellenistic culture.

THE CONSTITUTION OF COMPASSION:
POLITICAL REFLECTIONS ON PHILO'S
*DE HUMANITATE*¹

Walter T. Wilson

It is generally agreed that of his three commentary series, Philo's Exposition of the Law demonstrates the clearest signs of Hellenistic influence and systematic organization.² Evidence for this can be found in a major section of the work organized according to a version of the canon of cardinal virtues. The review of legislation begins with the general laws (*De decalogo*), then the particular ordinances dependent on each of them (*De specialibus legibus*). At *Spec.* 4.133–35, however, the direction of the discussion shifts: besides assigning laws to each of the commandments individually, Philo says, it is possible also to show that the Decalogue in its entirety accords with “the virtues of universal value.”³ These include εὐσέβεια/ὁσιότης, φρόνησις, and σωφροσύνη (which he claims to have spoken of earlier),⁴ as well as δικαιοσύνη, ἀνδρεία, and φιλανθρωπία (the topics of *Spec.* 4.136–238; *Virt.* 1–50, and 51–174 respectively).⁵ This recourse to the virtues as a structural and thematic device is consistent with the Exposition's aim of proving the superiority of Judaism within its Greco-Roman milieu.⁶ In particular, Philo endeavors to present the Jewish community not as an ethnic group,

¹ This essay originated as a paper delivered to the Philo of Alexandria Group at the Society of Biblical Literature Annual Meeting on November 22, 2005. My thanks to the participants, especially Gregory Sterling, for their comments.

² Jenny Morris, “The Jewish Philosopher Philo,” in Emil Schürer et al., eds., *The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ*, Vol. 3, Part 2 (rev. ed.; Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1987), 840–55; Peder Borgen, *Philo of Alexandria: An Exegete for His Time* (NovTSup 86; Leiden: Brill, 1997), 63–79.

³ Cf. Naomi G. Cohen, *Philo Judaeus: His Universe of Discourse* (BEATAJ 24; Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1995), 86–105.

⁴ Cf. *Decal.* 52; *Spec.* 2.12; 4.96.

⁵ Earle Hilgert, “A Review of Previous Research on Philo's *De Virtutibus*,” *SBLSP* 30 (1991): 103–15; David T. Runia, “Underneath Cohn and Colson: The Text of Philo's *De virtutibus*,” *SBLSP* 30 (1991): 116–34.

⁶ For other formulations of the canon, see, e.g., *Opif.* 73; *Abr.* 24, 219; *Mos.* 2.185; *Spec.* 2.62; *Praem.* 52, 160.

but as a nation guided by the “true” and “most excellent” philosophy,⁷ by which he means that it has been established according to laws and customs that constitute “the best *politeia*,”⁸ or constitution, which, as such, accords with the divine, cosmic *πολιτεία*.⁹

Of the six virtues mentioned in the Exposition, the first five would have been immediately recognizable as proper members of the philosophical (especially Platonic) canon.¹⁰ Philo’s sixth item, however, *φιλανθρωπία* or “humanity,” would have been, as David Konstan puts it, “a newcomer to the classical list of virtues.”¹¹ Questions arise, then, as to why (especially given his Platonic proclivities) Philo would devote such a long and rather involved treatise to the subject and what criteria he may have observed in the selection and organization of its contents.

1. MOSAIC HUMANITY AND PHILONIC APOLOGETICS

Contemporary scholarship on the Exposition has generally tended to take Philo’s arguments about *φιλανθρωπία* as a contribution to the commentary’s broader apologetic agenda.¹² The following comments from Katell Berthelot’s monograph, which includes the fullest and most recent treatment of *De humanitate*, are typical: “The presentation of the

⁷ *Opif.* 8; *Mos.* 2.212; *Virt.* 65; Valentin Nikiprowetzky, *Le commentaire de l’écriture chez Philon d’Alexandrie* (ALGHJ 11; Leiden: Brill, 1977), 97–116. As Philo explains in *Mos.* 2.216, when Jews gather to study “the ancestral philosophy,” what they learn is “prudence and courage and temperance and justice and also piety, holiness and every virtue.”

⁸ *Spec.* 3.167; *Virt.* 175; cf. *Decal.* 14; *Spec.* 2.73; 3.24, 181; 4.10, 226; *Virt.* 108, 219; *Praem.* 4; Harry A. Wolfson, *Philo* (2 vols.; Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1947), 2:374–95.

⁹ See *Decal.* 97–98, with Borgen, *Philo of Alexandria*, 73; cf. *Opif.* 143; *Ios.* 28–29; *Spec.* 1.51, 63, 314; 4.55, 159; *Virt.* 127.

¹⁰ E.g., Plato, *Lach.* 199D; *Prot.* 349B; *Gorg.* 507C. Further, Helen North, “Canons and Hierarchies of the Cardinal Virtues in Greek and Latin Literature,” in Luitpold Wallach, ed., *The Classical Tradition: Literary and Historical Studies in Honor of Harry Caplan* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1966), 165–83.

¹¹ David Konstan, “Philo’s *De virtutibus* in the Perspective of Classical Greek Philosophy,” *StPhAnn* 18 (2006): 59–72. Regarding *φιλανθρωπία* in philosophical literature he writes, “I do not know of a passage in which it is explicitly included in a list of virtues.”

¹² E.g., Milo Dean van Veldhuizen, “‘Philanthropia’ in Philo of Alexandria: A Scriptural Perspective” (Ph.D. diss., University of Notre Dame, 1982); Peder Borgen, “*Philanthropia* in Philo’s Writings: Some Observations,” in *Biblical and Humane: A Festschrift for John F. Priest* (ed. Linda Bennett Elder, David L. Barr, and Elizabeth Struthers Malbon; SPSHS 20; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1996), 173–88.

humanity of the Mosaic Law represents the heart of the philonian refutation of certain accusations made by pagan authors. Whether Philo mentions the humanity of the legislator or of the legislation, in both cases it is Moses as well as the Law that are defended."¹³ Above all, Philo intends to refute the sorts of charges familiar to us from authors like Diodorus Siculus and Tacitus, to the effect that the Jews alone of all nations express goodwill only to their own people, but nothing but animosity towards other people.¹⁴ Philo's response consists in

affirming that the *philanthrôpia* taught by Moses' Law aims at the entirety of creation and not at the Jewish people alone. Indeed, the texts accusing the Jews of *misanthrôpia* are about the attitude of Jews regarding non-Jews, and not the relationships of Jews among themselves.... In *De virtutibus*, he particularly seeks to demonstrate that the impact of the *philanthrôpia* prescribed by Mosaic laws is not limited to the Jewish community but extends to other categories of people as well...¹⁵

The challenge that presents itself, then, is "to prove that Moses' Law prescribes *philanthrôpia* towards every individual, even though it does not in fact usually legislate for the category 'every man.'"¹⁶ Accordingly, one of Philo's priorities is to demonstrate the "universality" of Mosaic *φιλανθρωπία* by showcasing provisions of the Law that encourage Jews to practice *φιλανθρωπία* in their interactions with non-Jews.

That the Exposition exhibits traits of apologetic discourse is undeniable.¹⁷ At the same time, what the topic of *φιλανθρωπία* contributes to this discourse may be more complicated than Berthelot's comments suggest. In particular, the question of the *referents* of Mosaic humanity in the Exposition (i.e., the recipients or beneficiaries of humane action carried out by Jews) is one that warrants further scrutiny. We may begin with three sets of preliminary observations.

The first set has to do with the broader literary setting of *De humanitate*. Outside of this treatise, there are thirty-two occurrences of *φιλανθρωπία* in the Exposition. When examined in terms of referent,

¹³ Katell Berthelot, *Philanthrôpia Judaica: le débat autour de la "misanthropie" des lois juives dans l'antiquité* (JSJ 76; Leiden: Brill, 2003), 265. Translations of Berthelot's French text are my own.

¹⁴ On the "misoxenia/misanthrôpia motif," see Peter Schäfer, *Judeophobia: Attitudes toward the Jews in the Ancient World* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1997), 15–33.

¹⁵ Berthelot, *Philanthrôpia Judaica*, 266–67.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 268.

¹⁷ See, e.g., *Hum.* 141, discussed below.

these fall under four basic headings.¹⁸ In four cases, the referent is not specified. We are told, for example, that those who aspire to virtue must cultivate this trait, but with no indication as to the group or individuals towards whom humanity should be directed (*Spec.* 1.295; cf. *Mos.* 2.9; *Spec.* 1.324; 4.72). In another four cases, the referent is ambiguous. For example, in *Spec.* 2.141, Philo explains that it is a mark of humanity to share good things with the “worthy” (ἄξιτοι), which might conceivably include non-Jews along with Jews, though this is not specified (cf. *Spec.* 2.63; 3.152; 4.18). In over half the cases, there is little doubt that the referents are fellow Jews.¹⁹ For example, on a half-dozen occasions the referents are Jewish priests (*Spec.* 1.221; 2.183; 4.97) or members of their households (*Spec.* 1.120, 126, 129). There are even occasions when Philo can imply that the φιланθρωπία that Jews are expected to observe in their interactions with one another does not apply to their interactions with other people.²⁰ This leaves us with only a few passages where the referents might belong to Berthelot’s “other categories of people” (*Abr.* 107, 109; *Ios.* 94). Looking at the presentation of humanity in the Exposition as a whole, then, its application to non-Jews does not appear to be a prominent feature.

A second set of observations can be made regarding *De humanitate* itself. The main body of the treatise is a survey of Mosaic laws that, in Philo’s estimation, promote humanity, organized according to the categories of people, animals, and plants, presented in the reverse order of creation:²¹

80–124	A. Humanity expressed towards people:
82–101	1. ὁμοεθνεῖς who are poor/landless
82–87, 89	a. debtors
88	b. day laborers
90–94, 97–98	c. the hungry
95	d. priests
96, 99–101	e. those dispossessed of their property

¹⁸ This does not include the three occasions in which it is divine, not human, φιλανθρωπία that is under discussion: *Abr.* 79; *Mos.* 1.198; *Virt.* 188.

¹⁹ Besides what follows, see *Ios.* 240; *Mos.* 1.249; 2.242; *Dec.* 164; *Spec.* 2.71, 78, 79, 104, 110, 138; 4.15, 24.

²⁰ E.g., compare *Spec.* 2.123; 3.137–41 with *Spec.* 2.79–80; 4.4, 15.

²¹ For analysis, see Walter T. Wilson, “Philo: *On Humanity*,” in Louis Feldman, James Kugel, and Lawrence Schiffman, eds., *The Lost Bible: Ancient Jewish Writings Outside of Scripture* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, forthcoming). For the outline, cf. Leopold Cohn et al., *Philo von Alexandria: Die Werke in Deutscher Übersetzung*, Vol. 2 (2nd ed.; Berlin: de Gruyter, 1962), 318–19.

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|--------|--|
| 102–8 | 2. proselytes and settlers |
| 109–20 | 3. enemies and war captives |
| 121–24 | 4. Jewish slaves |
| 125–47 | B. Humanity expressed towards animals: |
| 126–33 | 1. newborn domestic animals (and by analogy, newborn infants) |
| 134–36 | 2. domestic animals and their offspring |
| 137–41 | 3. unborn domestic animals (and by analogy, the innocent unborn) |
| 142–44 | 4. newborn lambs |
| 145 | 5. treading oxen |
| 146–47 | 6. oxen and asses (and by analogy, Jews and ἑτεροεθναί) |
| 148–60 | C. Humanity expressed towards plants: |
| 149–54 | 1. cultivated trees (even those of enemies) |
| 155–60 | 2. newly planted trees |

Concentrating on the question of referents here, we find references to non-Jews only in 102–20, 146–47 (though the point being made here is obscure, to say the least; cf. *Spec.* 4.205–6), and 149–54 (assuming that ἑθνοί refers to non-Jews). In sum, then, less than one-fourth of the treatise concerns humanity as it is expressed by Jews towards non-Jews. In addition, the first mention of non-Jews does not occur until almost half-way through the treatise. Finally, no reference is made to non-Jews in either the Introduction (51–79) or the Conclusion (161–74) of the treatise. It is significant that analyses such as Berthelot's spend comparatively little time discussing these sections, though it is fair to assume that at least some of Philo's reasons for writing would be communicated in one or both of them.

A third set of observations can be made regarding *Hum.* 141, one of the few places where the apologetic profile of the Exposition becomes explicit:

After this let those clever slanderers continue, if they can, to accuse the nation of misanthropy and charge the laws with enjoining unfriendly and unsociable practices, when . . . our people through the instructions of the law learn from their earliest years to correct any willfulness of their souls to that which is civilized.²²

It is noteworthy that in countering the charge of μισανθρωπία and stating positively what it is that the law promotes, Philo says nothing here about the interaction of Jews with non-Jews. This statement

²² Cf. *Spec.* 2.167.

concludes a section of the treatise dealing with Lev 22:28, which prohibits sacrificing a mother animal and its offspring on the same day (137–41). Philo contends that this statute inspired the leaders of other nations to introduce the law that prohibits executing a pregnant woman condemned to death until after her child is born. So non-Jews are indeed the beneficiaries of Mosaic *φιλανθρωπία*, but not as the result of any law about how Jews ought to treat them. Rather the Mosaic law itself serves as a model that inspires other lawmakers to be more humane in dealing with their own people.

Taken together, these observations indicate that Philo's presentation of Mosaic humanity in fact incorporates a broad range of referents and social situations, including many that are internal to the Jewish community. If we were to identify a common denominator for all of this material, it seems that in each case Philo expounds a situation in which we see not Jews interacting with non-Jews, but those who possess means, power, or authority interacting with those who do not: land-owners pay day-laborers their wages on time, victorious soldiers grant their female captives a period of mourning, farmers do not muzzle their oxen when they tread out the grain, and so on. This particular type of social dynamic is reflected also in the treatise's Introduction (51–79) and Conclusion (161–74), comprising about one-third of the treatise, which deal with how persons in positions of authority, especially political authority, understand and use their power.²³ In the former, Moses makes “humane” rather than selfish decisions about the choice of a successor to lead the nation. In the latter, the ruling classes are exhorted to abstain from insolence and to instead imitate God by using their resources to promote the common good.

2. VIRTUE DISCOURSE AND CONSTITUTIONAL ORIGINS

Attention to this dimension of philonic *φιλανθρωπία* suggests a different line of inquiry for investigating the Exposition, especially given the fact that the concept of humanity figured prominently in various forms of contemporaneous political discourse. To take just one example: in the literature on kingship (*περὶ βασιλείας*), humanity is generally included

²³ Note how the Conclusion opens with the language of *ἡγεμονία* (161–62), recalling the principal issue addressed by the Introduction (53, 57, 72).

among the desiderata of the ideal ruler.²⁴ This attribute comes to expression especially when he protects the weaker from the stronger, when he dispenses benefits to those who most need them, and when he observes restraint in executing the powers of his office. By honoring this virtue in his own character he sets an example for others to follow, and so humanity becomes a moral qualification for the ruling classes generally.

Among Philo scholars, E. R. Goodenough contributed as much as anyone to our understanding of this literature.²⁵ In terms of its relevance to the Exposition, however, he restricted himself largely to *De Iosepho*.²⁶ Among other things, this meant that relatively little attention was paid to the theme of φιλανθρωπία (the term does not even appear in the index to his book on Philo's politics). Another consequence was that relatively little attention was paid to how the sorts of virtues extolled in the kingship literature figured in other forms of political discourse. In fact, however, there are any number of different generic possibilities that might repay consideration in this regard. One genre that seems to have potential for comparative analysis is "the account of constitutional origins."²⁷ Much like the Exposition, examples of this kind of discourse draw extensively on the language of virtue, applying it both to the state's rulers and to the laws that they establish.

One of the fullest examples of this genre is the *Antiquitates Romanae* of Dionysius of Halicarnassus, published beginning in 7 BCE. He explains in the preface to the work that he is writing in part to refute certain strains of anti-Roman propaganda, according to which Rome was founded, in essence, by a band of misfits. His thesis, to the contrary, is that from the beginning Rome was led by men "fit to rule," in other words, men preeminent in virtue. The elaboration of such a thesis, he says, ought to be of interest to anyone interested in ruling well, since what is being described is the best πολιτεία, based on the

²⁴ See, e.g., Isocrates, *Ad Nic.* 15; Dio Chrysostom, *1 Regn.* 18, 20; *2 Regn.* 26, 77; *3 Regn.* 39, 55; *4 Regn.* 24; Musonius Rufus, frg. 8.66.11; *Let. Aris.* 290. Further, Pierre Hadot, "Fürstenspiegel," *RAC* 8 (1972): 568–610.

²⁵ "The Political Philosophy of Hellenistic Kingship," *YCS* 1 (1928): 53–102.

²⁶ *The Politics of Philo Judaeus: Practice and Theory* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1938), ch. 3.

²⁷ Other examples of this genre might include Aristotle's *Athenian Constitution* and Xenophon's *Constitution of the Lacedaemonians*; book 2 of Cicero's *Republic*; and some of Plutarch's biographies, such as those of Lycurgus and Numa. Also Josephus, *Jewish Antiquities* 1–4, for which see Louis H. Feldman, *Flavius Josephus: Translation and Commentary*, Vol. 3 (Leiden: Brill, 2000), xxiv–xxix.

judgments of the best leaders, especially the first kings of Rome, and especially Romulus.²⁸ This will prove that the institutions and customs of Roman society are not just accidents of history but in fact embody the intentional design of its founder, the superiority of whose vision and plan for the state is proven through time as it overcomes all manner of ordeals and obstacles.

Of course what Dionysius provides us is hardly an unbiased account. On the contrary, it is apparent that he has expended considerable energy reworking his source material. This is a project that entails the reconstruction of Roman origins, idealized especially according to the principles of Greek political culture. A leading authority on the *Antiquitates*, Emilio Gabba, has argued that Dionysius has accessed this culture especially through the writings of Isocrates, who, not coincidentally, wrote several kingship treatises.²⁹ Dionysius's efforts in this regard result in what Gabba refers to as "a foundation narrative proclaiming Roman Greekness." Specifically, in demonstrating how the Roman state realizes Greek ideals, Dionysius hopes to legitimize Rome as a "civilizing power," one whose ascendancy is morally deserved, and whose *πολιτεία* is justifiably a universal *πολιτεία*.³⁰ Toward this end, Dionysius employs a range of narrative strategies, each meant to prove the essentially Greek character of Rome's first kings and the constitutional order that they establish.³¹

One of these strategies involves associating specific persons and events in Roman history with a set of conventional Greek virtues, which function as recurring themes of moral assessment.³² In the first book of the *Antiquitates* one of these virtues is introduced in a way that seems to be programmatic:

Such, then, are the facts concerning the origin of the Romans which I have been able to discover after my reading very diligently many

²⁸ Dionysius' interest in amplifying the role of the founder figure is evident, e.g., when the comparatively lengthy account in *Ant. rom.* 1.77.1–2.56.7 is compared with its counterpart in Livy, *Ab urbe condita* 1.4.1–1.16.8.

²⁹ For what follows, see Emilio Gabba, "Studi su Dionigi da Alicarnasso: La costituzione di Romolo," *Athenaeum* 38 (1960): 175–225.

³⁰ Cf. Paul Marius Martin, "Rome, cité grecque dressée contre les barbares, d'après les 'excerpta' de Denys d'Halicarnasse," *Pallas* 53 (2000): 147–58.

³¹ Cf. Earnest Cary, *The Roman Antiquities of Dionysius of Halicarnassus*, Vol. 1 (LCL; London: Heinemann; Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1937), xi–xxviii.

³² Cf. David L. Balch, "Two Apologetic Encomia: Dionysius on Rome and Josephus on the Jews," *JSS* 13 (1982): 102–21.

works... Hence, from now on let the reader forever renounce the views of some who make Rome the retreat of barbarians, fugitives, and vagabonds, and let him confidently affirm it to be a Greek city—which will be easy when it is seen to be the most social (κοινοτάτην) and humane (φιλανθρωποτάτην) of all cities. (1.89.1; cf. 1.4.1–3; 14.6.6)

Dionysius will go on to use the term φιλανθρωπία over eighty times, narrating how various institutions, laws, and measures enacted by Roman leaders embody and effect this virtue, creating the impression that humanity pervades and permeates Roman society. One of the ways that he does this is by showing how the virtue applies to an array of different referents, including many familiar from our outline of *De humanitate*:

the poor	4.4.7; 5.22.1; 5.65.2; 6.78.1; 11.10.4
the hungry	4.24.5; 12.1.2–3
the dispossessed/landless	3.1.4–5; 3.31.3; 8.71.4; 8.78.1–2
debtors	4.10.1–3; 6.81.3–4; 7.30.2–4
foreign residents	1.9.4; 3.11.5; 6.56.2–3
slaves	1.9.4; 4.14.4
clients	2.8.1–2.9.3
enemies, captives	5.36.2–3; 5.60.1; 5.76.4; 7.53.3; 12.6.3; 20.6.1
sedition groups	6.67.2; 6.83.3

Among other things, this catalogue is of interest inasmuch as it represents a virtual check list of what ancient political theorists generally identified as the principal sources of social instability.³³ And this connects precisely to a point that Dionysius makes repeatedly in his history. On occasion after occasion, the Romans are shown encountering various threats to their social order involving one or more of these groups. And in each case we learn that because those with means or authority are guided in their interactions with these groups by φιλανθρωπία, the crisis is resolved in a manner that preserves civic unity. In contrast to other states, which are forever fractured by στάσις, the Romans have established constitutional constraints on potential abuses of power that could destabilize their society. Indeed, “so secure was the Romans’ harmony (ὁμόνοια), which owed its birth to the regulations of Romulus, that they never in the course of six hundred and thirty years proceeded to bloodshed and mutual slaughter, though many great controversies arose between the populace and their magistrates concerning public policy”

³³ See, e.g., M. I. Finley, *Politics in the Ancient World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), ch. 5.

(2.11.2). The cumulative effect of this narrative pattern functions as a guarantee (as Dionysius sees things) of the Romans' moral excellence, evidenced in the strength, stability, and longevity of their *πολιτεία*. It is no wonder that Roman rule comes to be admired and emulated by other nations, as we hear in a summary statement about Rome's second king: "By these means (i.e., fostering acts of *φιλανθρωπία*) Numa came to be beloved of his subjects, the example of his neighbors, and the theme of posterity. It was owing to these measures that civil dissension (*στάσις*) never broke the harmony (*ὁμόνοιαν*) of the state..." (2.76.2–3).

Transitions in political leadership represented another common and much discussed source of social volatility.³⁴ Consistent with the priorities mentioned above, it is significant that narrating these sorts of scenarios provides occasions for both Dionysius and Philo to demonstrate how their respective founder figures observed *φιλανθρωπία*. Philo does this in the Introduction to *De humanitate*,³⁵ which explains that as Moses neared death he did not choose one of his relatives to succeed him as leader of the Israelites, but left the decision to divine judgment. God then selects a man who, because he is supreme in virtue, will maintain good order (*εὐνομία*) for the people (60–61).³⁶

Dionysius raises the issue of political succession on a number of occasions, which provide him with opportunities to explain in particular how the Romans avoided the uncertainties associated with hereditary kingship.³⁷ The succession narrative of Numa in 2.57.1–2.58.3 is in many regards prototypical. We are told that he ascended the throne not by force or on account of any personal relationship with Romulus, but because he was elected to the office by the Roman Senate owing to his superior wisdom. Later these procedures are institutionalized for the entire state. Indeed, among Rome's "most humane laws" is the provision that its magistrates are to rule only with the consent of those governed (5.19.4; cf. 2.4.1–2; 4.40.2). On the other hand, the antithesis of this ideal is embodied in the violent reign of Rome's last king, Tarquinius

³⁴ For a list of primary texts, see Charles H. Talbert, *Reading Luke-Acts in its Mediterranean Milieu* (NovTSup 107; Leiden: Brill, 2003), 19–55.

³⁵ Cf. Louis H. Feldman, "The Death of Moses, According to Philo," *EstBib* 60 (2002): 225–54.

³⁶ Not surprisingly, *εὐνομία* is extolled as a political asset by Dionysius as well, e.g., *Ant. rom.* 9.45.1; 10.19.1–2.

³⁷ Here Dionysius may betray the influence of Polybius and his theory of constitutional degeneration, esp. *Hist.* 6.7.1–9.

“the Arrogant” (4.41.4; cf. 1.75.2). Similar language is employed in the Conclusion to *De humanitate* to summarize the treatise’s contents. Indeed, in Philo’s interpretation, the primary motivation behind Moses’ directives to the people on humanity was to set those in high office “beyond the reach of pride and arrogance” (161, cf. 162–65) so as to protect the civic body.

3. APOLOGIES FOR COMPASSION COMPARED

The *Antiquitates* sheds some light on how the discourse of Greek virtue could be appropriated in the project of re-describing the constitutional origins of a πολιτεία as the ideal πολιτεία. In particular, Dionysius illustrates the types of situations in which such a πολιτεία might be expected to demonstrate the virtue of φιλανθρωπία, and what such observance was thought to reveal about the character of the state and its leaders. Presumably any state with aspirations to being a “universal” (or at least universally admired) πολιτεία would need to address in its modes of self-representation issues of social unity and stability, including how moral configurations of institutional power contribute to these ends.

Philo also claims to be describing the ideal or universal πολιτεία, established by the ideal founder. In concert with this, he claims the discourse of Greek political culture as his own, interpreting Greek ideals in terms of his source material and the historical and institutional particularities intrinsic to it. In this manner he demonstrates how those who belong to this πολιτεία embody the highest aspirations of the host culture. This provides a different vantage point from which to understand Philo’s claims regarding Mosaic “universality,” such as expressed, for example, in *Hum.* 119: “This is what the most holy prophet especially intends to create, concord (ὁμόνοιαν), fellowship (κοινωνίαν), and unanimity, whereby households and cities, nations and countries, and the entire human race may advance to supreme happiness.” Mosaic humanity is not simply a matter of interaction between Jews and non-Jews, but in fact provides a standard by which all the major institutions of human society can thrive.

That Dionysius writes an apology regarding the origins of the *Roman* state makes his account especially relevant for comparative analysis. Given Philo’s geopolitical setting, as well as his own personal experience, any thesis on his part about ideal constitutions would need to take into

account the realities and representations of Roman rule.³⁸ The evidence proffered by the *Antiquitates* suggests that claims regarding the virtue of humanity would have been ingredient to such representations, a fact that is confirmed by other sources of the era.³⁹ By advancing comparable claims, Philo's re-reading of Jewish origins would have resonated with basic elements of imperial ideology and prevailing forms of political rhetoric. Indeed, it is his hope that "all future rulers would find a law to guide them right by looking to Moses as their archetype and model" (*Hum.* 70; cf. *Mos.* 2.51). The political aspirations of the dominant culture are met in the person and legacy of the Jewish lawgiver.⁴⁰

At the same time, there are significant differences between these two texts as well, and attention to these differences helps to illuminate some of the Exposition's distinctive features. Three of these may be mentioned here.

First, while they may agree as to many of the typical referents of humanity in the ideal state, the two authors have their own emphases as well. Dionysius includes the role of humanity in patron-client relations, for example, a topic of little interest to Philo, who pays attention instead to the virtue's significance for human-nonhuman relations. In this he appears to draw on contemporary reflections, familiar from philosophical (especially Pythagorean) circles, on the idea that one can learn virtue from practicing kindness not only to fellow human beings but even to plants and animals.⁴¹

The two authors also differ in terms of how they access Greek culture. Dionysius does this principally through Isocrates, Philo principally through Plato. Among other things, this may help explain some of the distinctiveness in the moral argot of *De humanitate*. For instance,

³⁸ Cf. Walter T. Wilson, "Pious Soldiers, Gender Deviants, and the Ideology of Actium: Courage and Warfare in Philo's *De fortitudine*," *StPhilAnn* 17 (2005): 1–32.

³⁹ See, e.g., Arnold A. T. Ehrhardt, "Imperium und humanitas: Grundlagen des römischen Imperialismus," *Studium Generale* 14 (1961): 646–64; Traute Adam, *Clementia Principis: Der Einfluß Hellenistischer Fürstenspiegel auf den Versuch einer rechtlichen Fundierung des Principats durch Seneca* (Kieler Historische Studien 11; Stuttgart: E. Klett, 1970), esp. 82–101.

⁴⁰ Dionysius similarly hopes that the current ruling classes will look to Romulus *et alii* as models of political behavior: Clemence Schultze, "Dionysius of Halicarnassus and His Audience," in I. S. Moxon, J. D. Smart, A. J. Woodman, eds., *Past Perspectives: Studies in Greek and Roman Historical Writing* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 121–41.

⁴¹ Katell Berthelot, "Philo and Kindness Towards Animals (*De virtutibus* 125–147)," *StPhilAnn* 14 (2002): 48–65. She notes a contrast between Pythagorean and Stoic positions in this regard.

in explicating the nature of φιλανθρωπία, Philo depends more than Dionysius on the language of φιλία.⁴² It is possible that this reflects the influence of Plato's *Leges* (cf. *Mos.* 2.49), where the observance of φιλία between citizens is emphasized repeatedly as being expressive of their unity.⁴³

Even when Philo does not utilize the actual language of friendship, his interpretations seem to invoke priorities reminiscent of Plato's friendship ethic. To take just one example, in 82–87 he reviews the proscription of lending at interest, which is mentioned among the commercial activities forbidden to citizens in the *Leges* as well (742C).⁴⁴ Such steps, Plato informs us, are necessary in a state whose purpose is to make its citizens not rich, but friends (743C–D). At the same time, they are permitted to lend without interest, though the terms of even these loans are not enforceable, since legal disputes are precisely the sort of thing that should never divide φίλοι (*Leg.* 915E; cf. 743D). Philo similarly maintains that Moses' intent with these laws was to create citizens more concerned with fellowship (κοινωνία) than profit-making.

Finally, there are significant differences between the two in terms of literary structure. Dionysius weaves virtue discourse throughout the *Antiquitates*, especially in the speeches and narrative summaries.⁴⁵ Philo, by contrast, has created distinct sections on the virtues, and in this regard the Exposition looks more like the work of a Hellenistic philosopher.⁴⁶ It can be compared, accordingly, with a text like Iamblichus' *De vita Pythagorica*, itself a kind of account of constitutional origins.⁴⁷ One section of the book, chapters 28–33, presents the way of life established by

⁴² See *Hum.* 55, 60, 96, 103, 109, 115, 125, 152, 173. This is not to say that such language is absent from Dionysius, only that he uses it less frequently in conjunction with φιλανθρωπία (cf. 14.6.1), and usually in connection with alliances between states or between the leaders of states (e.g., 3.6.3).

⁴³ Glenn R. Morrow, *Plato's Cretan City: A Historical Interpretation of the Laws* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1960), 561–62. Philo is indebted to Stoic conceptions of friendship as well: Gregory E. Sterling, "The Bond of Humanity: Friendship in Philo of Alexandria," in John T. Fitzgerald, ed., *Greco-Roman Perspectives on Friendship* (SBLRBS 34; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1997), 203–23.

⁴⁴ Cf. *Leg.* 921C–D; *Resp.* 465B–C, 556A–556A–B.

⁴⁵ The extensive use of speeches accords with the goal of demonstrating how political differences are resolved by peaceful, rational means.

⁴⁶ Compare, e.g., book one of Cicero's *De officiis* (a reworking of Panaetius's Περὶ τοῦ καθήκοντος). Among philosophers it seems to have been *de rigueur* to write περὶ ἀρετῶν. See Diogenes Laertius, *Vit. phil.* 5.50; 7.90, 125–28, 175, 202; 9.55.

⁴⁷ Hubert Cancik explores the broader phenomenon of "institutional history" in "The History of Culture, Religion, and Institutions in Ancient Historiography: Philological Observations Concerning Luke's History," *JBL* 116 (1997): 673–95.

the philosopher/founder according to the virtues of εὐσέβεια/ὀσιότης (28), σοφία (29), δικαιοσύνη (30), σωφροσύνη (31), ἀνδρεία (32), and φιλία (33). This approximates the schema announced by Philo at *Spec.* 4.133–35, and all the more so if we bear in mind that φιλανθρωπία was sometimes understood as a species or extension of φιλία (for example, Aristotle, *Eth. nic.* 8.1.3).⁴⁸ The position accorded φιλία in the overall presentation is also noteworthy. In certain respects it seems to be understood as a culminating virtue or meta-virtue, inasmuch as one learns how to practice the other virtues through the relationships developed out of friendship. These include relationships with God, with fellow citizens and family members, and even with animals (33.229).⁴⁹ Philo similarly seems to understand φιλανθρωπία as a means by which other virtues are cultivated. This is articulated most vividly in the description of the ideal ruler cum sage with which he concludes *De humanitate*. His commitment to observing humanity in the exercise of his authority in fact belongs to a broader set of social objectives, namely, to “impart to his neighbors his wisdom, to the self-controlled his moderation, to the valiant his courage, to the just his righteousness, and in general to the good his goodness” (*Hum.* 167). In this light, φιλανθρωπία can be understood both as a specific norm and consequence of obedience to the law as well as a catalyst for the activity of virtue more generally.

⁴⁸ Cf. Benjamin Fiore, “The Theory and Practice of Friendship in Cicero,” in Fitzgerald, *Greco-Roman Perspectives on Friendship*, 59–76, esp. 61.

⁴⁹ Cf. Michael von Albrecht, “Das Menschenbild in Jamblichs Darstellung der pythagoreischen Lebensform,” in Heinz-Günther Nesselrath et al., eds., *Jamblich. Pythagoras: Legende—Lehre—Lebensgestaltung* (SAPER 4; Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2002), 263–65.

MOSES, THE EXODUS, AND COMPARATIVE CHRONOLOGY

William Adler

Students of Hellenistic Judaism owe Carl Holladay a collective debt of gratitude for his wide-ranging contributions to the field. One point that comes through unmistakably from his work is the centrality of Moses. For Artapanus and other early representatives of Hellenistic Judaism, this was a matter of establishing, often naïvely, Moses' contributions to universal culture.¹ While such claims assumed that Moses was a figure of the remote past, only later did Jewish writers find it necessary to demonstrate this point empirically, that is, by sifting through the evidence of chronology.

There was more at stake here than establishing Moses as a culture hero. Proving the antiquity of Moses and the Exodus would also put to rest the charge that the Jews were a people lacking the credentials of antiquity. Let the Egyptian detractors of Judaism, writes Josephus, say what they will in deprecation of Moses and the Exodus. By the words of their own historians, they prove that "our deliverance out of Egypt was so ancient in time as to have preceded the siege of Troy by almost a thousand years."² Thanks in large part to the efforts of Josephus and other Jewish authors of the Hellenistic age, Christian apologists were able to tap into a rich store of chronological arguments about Moses and the Exodus as part of their defense of Christianity against its learned critics. Eusebius's exposition of the *status quaestionis* in the tenth book of his *Praeparatio Evangelica* gives us a good idea of the energy that writers must have poured into the effort. Here he sets forth an impressive array of sources—Christian, Jewish, and pagan—all attesting the antiquity of Moses.³

¹ For the fragments of Artapanus, see C. R. Holladay, ed., *Fragments from Hellenistic Jewish Authors*, Volume 1: *Historians* (Chico, Ca.: Scholars Press, 1983), 189–243.

² Cf. Josephus, *Ag. Ap.* 1.104.

³ Eusebius, *Praep. ev.* 10.9–12 (ed. G. Schroeder and É. des Places; SC 369; Paris, 1991). The English translation of the *Praeparatio* is adapted from the edition of E. H. Gifford (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1903; repr., Grand Rapids: Baker, 1981).

The *Praeparatio* is a sprawling work of apologetic, purporting to reassure pagan readers of the early fourth century that Christians were a people with primordial roots, older in fact than the Jews and certainly the Greeks. As with other works of this genre, it was in Eusebius's interests to create the impression that the date of Moses was a settled matter. But as we parse his words more closely, it becomes clear that the subject was more contested than Eusebius first gives us to believe. There were differences in the way the various writers pursued their investigation, and the results they achieved were hardly consistent. All of this suggests that there was more to the subject than simply the reflexive repetition of a well-worn apologetic *topos*. Once research into the date of Moses took on a life of its own, it was no longer possible simply to rehearse conventional wisdom.⁴

MOSES AND COMPARATIVE GRECO-JEWISH CHRONOLOGY

While those who had explored the date of Moses did so through “the use of a rich and varied arrangement,” Eusebius states, their method was essentially the same. Regardless of the sources consulted—whether Greek, Phoenician, Chaldean, or Egyptian—they all conducted their investigations by setting their sources side by side and “shaking them together (συγκρούσαντες) one against the other.”⁵ In the more prosaic language of modern scholarship, we might describe this method as “comparative chronology.”

Jewish chronographers of the Hellenistic age were relatively late in taking up the study of comparative Greek and Hebrew chronology.⁶ In the insular world of *Jubilees*, there is no attention paid to it. Nor does it figure in the admittedly fragmentary remains of Demetrius “the chronographer” (3rd cent. BCE). Demetrius's chief objective was to resolve *aporiae* in biblical chronology, not to demonstrate the comparative antiquity of Moses and the Exodus.⁷ When later Jewish writers did

⁴ One of the best studies of this question is still J. Sirinelli, *Les vues historiques d'Eusèbe de Césarée durant la période prénicéenne* (Publications de la sections de langues et littératures 10; Dakar, 1961), 497–515.

⁵ Eusebius, *Praep.* ev. 10.9.27.

⁶ For a programmatic study of the stages in the development of Hellenistic Jewish chronography, see B. Z. Wacholder, *Eupolemus: A Study of Judaeo-Greek Literature* (Monographs of the Hebrew Union College 3; Cincinnati, 1974), 106–17.

⁷ For surviving fragments of Demetrius, see Holladay, *Historians*, 51–91. The seminal study of Demetrius is still A. J. Freudenthal, *Alexander Polyhistor und die von ihm erhaltenen*

take up this project, the first challenge they faced was to authenticate the date of Moses through chronological conventions recognizable to Greek readers.

One widely-known benchmark was the Olympiad era (Ol. 1,1 = 776 BCE), first introduced in the third century BCE. Because it offered a relatively uniform system in place of what had previously been fragmentary and disparate local chronicles, Olympiad reckoning marked a major breakthrough in Greek chronography, onto which other dating systems could be grafted.⁸ Events before the first Olympiad were mostly relegated to the realm of pre-history. According to Varro, they belonged in the category of the “mythical” or for even earlier periods the “indeterminate.”⁹ One date from the pre-Olympiad period for which there was a degree of certainty, however, was the end of the Trojan War, determined by Eratosthenes to have taken place some 407 years before the first Olympiad (= 1184/3 BCE). Any event that could be shown to have occurred before the Trojan War was thus of demonstrable antiquity, older than events that Greek historians had consigned to pre-history. Josephus and the Christian apologists who succeeded him made this point repeatedly.

For pre-Olympiad dating, chronographers depended mainly on lists of local rulers, best exemplified in the Athenian archon lists and the Spartan lists of ephors. These lists left much to be desired. To be meaningful at anything more than a local level, each list had to be correlated with records from other city-states. There were chronological gaps in the lists of rulers, and not all events were securely dated according to the years of their rule. Especially for the distant past, they sometimes provided only names, requiring chronographers to approximate the years of their rule. The confusion made an appealing target for anti-Greek polemic. In *Against Apion*, Josephus derides the local historians of Argos and Attica for their numerous disagreements.¹⁰ But since the nature

Reste jüdischer und samaritanischer Geschichtswerke (Breslau: Skutsch, 1875), 35–82; see also E. Bickerman, “The Jewish Historian Demetrius,” *Studies in Jewish and Christian History* 2 (ed. J. Neusner; Leiden: Brill, 1980), 347–58.

⁸ See A. E. Samuel, *Greek and Roman Chronology* (Handbuch der Altertumswissenschaft 1.7; Munich: Beck, 1972), 189–94; E. J. Bickerman, *Chronology of the Ancient World* (2nd ed.; Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1980), 75–76.

⁹ Varro, in Censorinus, *De die natali* 21.1–3 (ed. N. Sallmann; Leipzig: Teubner, 1983).

¹⁰ Josephus, *Ag. Ap.* 1.16–17. For discussion of these local chronicles, see Samuel, *Greek and Roman Chronology*, 195–245.

of their undertaking required Jewish and Christian chronographers to venture into the most distant recesses of Greek history, the challenge was to decide on a list of ancient Greek rulers that best suited the aims of comparative Jewish/Greek chronology.

To demonstrate the antiquity of Moses, it made sense to reckon his dates in relationship to a Greek kingdom with a continuous recorded past and recognized antiquity. In the Hellenistic age, there were three kingdoms vying with one another for this honor: Sicyon, Attica, and Argos. The Greek chronicler Castor of Rhodes (first cent. BCE) bolstered the case for Sicyon by synchronizing the rule of Aegialeus, the first recorded Sicyonian king, with the Assyrian king Ninus, a ruler regarded by Greek universal historians and chroniclers as the oldest recorded king of Asia.¹¹ Thanks to the influence of Castor's chronicle, the kingdom of Sicyon came to be recognized in the vulgate tradition of Greek chronography as the oldest kingdom. But this boast did not go uncontested. Athenian historians also laid claim to an illustrious past. In opposition to those chroniclers who continued to regard Ogygus as a figure of Greek's mythical past, the Atthidographers represented him as a historical figure, the autochthonous king of Attica during whose reign a great flood was said to have occurred.¹²

While Christian chronographers later seized on local Attic traditions in their attempts to date Moses and other remote events of biblical history, the earlier generation of Jewish and Christian chroniclers found the list of Argive kings preferable. It is not difficult to discover why. For one thing, there was an ancient tradition identifying the early kings of Argos with the very beginnings of Greek history. In his discussion with the Egyptian priest in Plato's *Timaeus*, Solon calls the Argive king Phoroneus the "first man" and numbers him among the "most ancient things in our part of the world."¹³ Despite the efforts of competing local chronicles, the view that the kingdom of Argos was the oldest continued to find advocates. "Of the Hellenic states," writes Clement of Alexandria on the authority of Dionysius of Halicarnassus, "the

¹¹ See Eusebius, *Chron.* 1.80.20–25 (ed. J. Karst; GCS 20 Eusebius Werke 5; Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1911).

¹² See below, p. 58. For the Athenians as autochthonous, see Josephus, *Ag Ap.* 1.21.

¹³ Plato, *Tim.* 22A. For Phoroneus as the first man, see also Acusilaus, quoted in Clement, *Strom.* 1.21.102 (ed. O. Stählin et al.; 2 vols.; GCS 15; Berlin, 1970). In the same passage, Clement states that author of the *Phoronis* called Phoroneus "the father of mortal men."

most ancient is that of Argos. I mean that which took its rise from Inachus.”¹⁴ There was also a very practical reason for choosing Argos: the end of the Trojan War occurred in the eighteenth year of the Argive king Agamemnon.¹⁵ A chronographer with access to a complete list of the names and years of Argive kings could therefore document with relative ease their dates in relationship to the Trojan War. The single remaining task was to discover the name of the Argive king during whose reign the Exodus occurred.

“TRIANGULATING” WITH EGYPTIAN CHRONOLOGY

This was not a simple problem, however. Because Greek historians had little to say about the history and chronology of the Jews, establishing Moses’ dates in relationship to the Trojan War, the first Olympiad, or an ancient Greek king required “triangulation” with a third source. For Josephus and the first generation of Christian apologists, the sources ready at hand were Egyptian. In the Hellenistic age, there appeared several Egyptian histories that mentioned the Jews, albeit unfavorably, in their narratives. And by that time, Egyptian historians had succeeded in formulating a comparative chronology of the early kings of Egypt and Argos.

Their reasons for doing so were akin to Josephus’s own. From the time of Herodotus, Greek historians were willing to concede the superior antiquity of Egyptian civilization. The *locus classicus* for this discussion was the famous and much-cited exchange between Solon and the Egyptian priest in Plato’s *Timaeus*. In order to draw the priest into a discussion about the distant past, Solon had first mentioned events and figures of Greek “ancient history”: the Argive king Phoroneus, the flood of Deucalion, and Niobe. When Solon computed how long ago these people lived by tracing the genealogy of their descendants, the reaction of his Egyptian counterpart was dismissive. A more temperate climate, immune from natural catastrophes, the priest says, had blessed the Egyptians with a continuous civilization extending eight thousand years (Plato, *Tim.* 22E).

¹⁴ Clement, *Strom.* 1.21.102.

¹⁵ For this date, see Tatian, *Oratio ad Graecos* 39.1 (ed. M. Whittaker; Oxford: Clarendon, 1982); Clement, *Strom.* 1.21.104; Eusebius, *Canons* 59^m (ed. R. Helm; 3rd ed.; GCS, Eusebius Werke 7; Berlin: Akademie, 1984).

Egyptian historians of the Hellenistic age drove home this point relentlessly. One way they did so was by contending that the earliest kings of Greece were not indigenous rulers, but rather migrants and colonists sent forth from the older civilization of Egypt. The assertion was not met with universal acclaim. The Egyptians offer no proof for it, writes Diodorus Siculus (1.29.5) in the first century BCE, and “no historian worthy of credence testifies in support” of it. Greek resistance notwithstanding, Egyptian historians persisted in claiming it.

Already in the early third century, the Egyptian priest Manetho dedicated to Ptolemy Philadelphus II a history of Egypt known as the *Aegyptiaca*. As with other Hellenistic ethnic histories of the Hellenistic period, the purpose of the *Aegyptiaca* was to correct Greek notions about Egypt by offering Greek readers a history purportedly based on native Egyptian records.¹⁶ In one passage preserved in Josephus’s *Against Apion*, Manetho describes how Danaus, a king of Argos who ruled well before the Trojan War, was actually an exile from Egypt. For Josephus, this was the critical link he needed to establish a comparative date for Moses. Although Manetho may in fact have said nothing about the Jews in his *Aegyptiaca*, Josephus was convinced that his narrative of the departure of the “Shepherds” from Egypt was a reference to the Exodus. Aided by Manetho’s account of their expulsion—an event that Manetho dated well before the migration of Danaus to Argos—Josephus concluded that the Exodus must have predated the Trojan War by “almost 1000 years.”¹⁷

After Manetho, other Egyptian histories and chronicles of similar patriotic intent followed, two of them catching the attention of Christian apologists. Ptolemy of Mendes (first century BCE) and after him the Egyptian grammarian Apion had both demonstrated that the Egyptian king Amosis (of the 18th dynasty) was a contemporary of Inachus, the oldest king of Argos. Equally important, they had also reported that the Exodus occurred during Amosis’s reign. Their findings soon became part of the common stock of Greco-Jewish comparative chronology. In the second century, the Christian apologist Tatian cited both writers in support of a chronological synchronism that was destined to become the underpinning of the conventional date of Moses and the

¹⁶ For collection and translation of surviving fragments of Manetho’s *Aegyptiaca*, see W. G. Waddell, *Manetho* (LCL; Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1980), 1–187.

¹⁷ Josephus, *Ag. Ap.* 1.103–105.

Exodus. "If the most illustrious deeds among the Greeks were recorded and made known after Inachus," Tatian writes, "it is manifest that they must have been after Moses."¹⁸ By the end of this century, the synchronism of Moses and the Exodus with the reigns of Amosis and Inachus was widely known and disseminated. In his *Stromata*, Clement numbers Tatian and Cassian (a figure not mentioned elsewhere) among its leading advocates.¹⁹

Eusebius would add other names to the list. Before Tatian, the Jewish historians Justus of Tiberias and Josephus, he writes, had already reached the same formulation. But because Eusebius, for reasons that we will discuss below, tends to collapse previous opinions on the subject into a single, undifferentiated tradition, his report must be treated with suspicion. There is not enough known about Justus to confirm or disconfirm his testimony.²⁰ And although Egyptian and Argive chronology is pivotal to Josephus's dating of the Exodus in *Against Apion*, he makes his case for the antiquity of Moses without appealing to the Moses-Inachus tradition. Josephus's chief source for the dating of Exodus was Manetho, not Apion and Ptolemy of Mendes. On the authority of Manetho, he reports that Tethmosis, not Amosis, was king of Egypt at the time of the Exodus. Nor does Josephus name the Argive king Inachus in connection with the time of the Exodus. Danaus, the tenth king of Argos, is the linchpin of his comparative Jewish/Greek chronology. Again on the authority of Manetho, Josephus reports that 393 years later after the Exodus, Danaus, the brother of Aegyptus, migrated to Argos, where he became king. Since, as Josephus observed, the "Argives regard Danaus as belonging to a remote antiquity," this of itself was proof of Moses' age.²¹

For the apologist, the best evidence is favorable testimony from an otherwise antagonistic witness. If Josephus had been aware that his adversary Apion had already acknowledged in his *Aegyptiaca* that Inachus was king of Argos at the time of the Exodus, we can be confident that

¹⁸ Tatian, *Orat.* 39.2.

¹⁹ Clement, *Strom.* 1.21.101; cf. *Strom.* 3.13.91, 92, 95; 3.17.102, where Clement refers to a Julius Cassianus known for his docetic and encratite leanings. On the figure of Cassian, see W. Christ, "Philologische Studien zu Clemens Alexandrinus," *Abhandlungen der philosophischen-philologischen Classe der bayerische Akademie der Wissenschaften* 21.3 (1901): 504–9.

²⁰ See T. Rajak, "Justus of Tiberias," in *The Jewish Dialogue with Greece and Rome: Studies in Cultural and Social Interaction* (ed. T. Rajak; Leiden: Brill, 2000), 163.

²¹ Josephus, *Ag. Ap.* 1.94–105.

he would have seized upon it. According to Josephus, Apion dated the Exodus much later, in the seventh Olympiad at the time of the founding of Carthage.²² This curious contradiction raises the possibility that by the second century the text of Apion, like Manetho's *Aegyptiaca*, had fallen prey to a Jewish or Christian editor with an agenda.²³ In any case, Josephus's own failure to mention the Moses-Amosis-Inachus synchronism suggests that it was not yet an established part of Jewish apologetic.

THE PURSUIT OF CHRONOLOGICAL PRECISION

Compared to the more fully developed studies of the question by Africanus and Eusebius, these initial forays were rather crude experiments. There is no attempt to establish a continuous comparative chronology of biblical and Greek history. Josephus and Tatian mainly piggyback on the witness of Egyptian authorities, which were understandably better for Egyptian than they were for Greek chronology. From Manetho's *Aegyptiaca*, Josephus was able to provide the years and months of the reigns of all the Egyptian kings who ruled from the Exodus to the migration of Danaus. All told, their reigns came to 393 years. Greek chronology was another matter, however. Josephus's wildly inflated approximation of the duration of time from the Exodus to the Trojan War suggests that he did not have access to a list of Argive kings and their rules comparable in reliability to the list of Egyptian kings he had received from Manetho. Tatian was only marginally better informed about Argive chronology. He knows that the Trojan War ended in the eighteenth year of Agamemnon's reign. And unlike Josephus, Tatian can enumerate the names of the twenty kings who ruled Argos from Inachus down to the reign of Agamemnon. But since he cannot produce the years of the reigns of these kings, the four hundred years that he reckons from Inachus to Agamemnon is only an estimate.²⁴

For the purposes of the Jewish or Christian apologist, this degree of imprecision was tolerable. From "the accurate histories" of Ptolemy of

²² Josephus, *Ag. Ap.* 2.17.

²³ Cf. Rajak, "Justus of Tiberias," 163–64; Wacholder, *Eupolemus*, 125–26. On the mutilation of the text of Manetho for partisan purposes, see Laqueur, *s.v.* "Manethon (1)," *RE* 14.1 (1928): 1060–1102 (summarized in Waddell, *Manetho*, xvii–xx).

²⁴ Tatian, *Orat.* 39.

Mendes and Apion, Tatian had all the proof he needed to demonstrate that the Exodus was as old as the reign of one of the earliest rulers of Greece. Once this critical point had been established, there was no reason to press the study of chronology any further. By the end of the second century, however, the comparative dating of Moses and the Exodus was no longer solely the province of the apologists. Christian universal chroniclers were also beginning to explore the question. And here the standards of accuracy were more exacting. For the Christian chronicler, the dating of Moses in relationship to the reign of a Greek king was no longer an end in itself, but only a building block in a much more ambitious project: namely, to formulate a continuous chronology of biblical history into which the historical records of other peoples could be integrated.

In the miniature universal chronicles of Theophilus of Antioch and Clement of Alexandria, we can already see the initial stages in the transition. Both works continue to pursue the same objective as the earlier Jewish and Christian apologists: namely, to demonstrate the originality of the teachings of Moses and his superiority to the combined wisdom of the Greeks. And their dating of Moses is largely unoriginal, even retrograde. Curiously, Theophilus does not develop the Moses-Amosis-Inachus synchronism, reverting instead to the older formulation of Josephus.²⁵

Clement's own dating of Moses remains derivative of Tatian, his chief authority. Egyptian history is still the link between Moses and the Exodus, on the one hand, and Greek (that is, Argive history) on the other. And Greek chronology is still inexact—a point Clement as much as concedes when he states that from the time of Inachus to the Trojan war, “twenty generations or more are reckoned; *let us say* (ὥς ἔπος ἐπείν) four hundred years and more.”²⁶ Even so, one can already see a change in focus. Like Theophilus, Clement elects to make his case in the form of an entire chronology of world history from Adam down to his own day. Along the way, he introduces a few refinements to Tatian's older formulation. As a supplement to Tatian's comparative chronology

²⁵ Theophilus, *Autol.* 3.20. For Theophilus's dependence on Josephus, see Sirinelli, *Les vues historiques*, 506–7; M. Hardwick, “*Contra Apionem* and Christian Apologetics,” in *Josephus' Contra Apionem: Studies in Its Character and Context, with a Latin Concordance to the Portion Missing in Greek* (ed. L. Feldman and J. R. Levison; Leiden: Brill, 1996), 371–78.

²⁶ Clement, *Strom.* 1.21.102. See Sirinelli, *Les vues historiques*, 508–9.

of the Exodus, he adds another ancient kingdom: the Assyrians. The Exodus, he writes, occurred in “the forty-second year of the Assyrian empire, in the thirty-second year of the reign of Belochus, in the time of Amosis the Egyptian, and of Inachus the Argive.” Since in the mainstream tradition of ancient chronography, Assyria was considered to be the oldest kingdom of Asia, it made sense for him to add their chronology into the mix.²⁷

JULIUS AFRICANUS AND THE DATING OF THE EXODUS: A QUESTION OF METHOD

In both its originality and precision, the fully-developed universal chronicle of Julius Africanus inaugurates a new stage in the discussion of the subject. Africanus was no longer satisfied, as Tatian and Clement had previously been, to rely uncritically on the authority of Egyptian sources to establish Moses’ date in relationship to Greek and Egyptian chronology. Nor do Argive chronology and the date of the Trojan War play the decisive role that they had for Tatian and Clement. Olympiad dating and Attic chronology have replaced them.

Africanus’s sources were different, and so was his entire approach. He outlines his comparative method in the introduction to book three of his *Chronographiae*.²⁸ In order to make direct chronological comparisons, the key question was to isolate an event in world history sufficiently noteworthy to have gained the attention of both Greek and biblical writers. He found such an event in Cyrus’s accession to power. Greek chroniclers and universal historians were unanimous in dating the first year of his rule in the first year of the 55th Olympiad (= 560 BCE).²⁹ Because Cyrus’s accession marked the end of the seventy years of exile described in the book of Jeremiah, the biblical narrative, or so

²⁷ For another example of the adaptation of Tatian by a universal chronicle, see the anonymous fragment in F. Petit, ed., *La Chaîne sur la Genèse* (Louvain: Peeters, 1996), 4:453–55 (frg. 2270). In this fragment, the author has assimilated *Jubilees*’ account of the death of Joseph (ll. 1–23 = *Jub.* 46.6–14; 47.1) to Tatian’s discussion of the date of Moses (ll. 29–60). Presumably, this excerpt made up part of a longer chronicle of which Tatian’s chronology of the Exodus was only one part.

²⁸ Excerpts from this section of Africanus’ *Chronographiae* are preserved in Eusebius, *Praep. ev.* 10.10 and *Georgii Syncelli Ecloga Chronographica* 71.7–73.11; 173.19–174.10 (ed. A. A. Mosshammer; Leipzig: Teubner, 1984).

²⁹ Eusebius, *Praep. ev.* 10.10.3–6. For the Olympiad date of Cyrus’s accession, see Diodorus Siculus 10.21.

Africanus believed, also marked the first year of his reign. The date was unfortunately not as secure as Africanus might have assumed. Eusebius, one of Africanus's critics, doubted whether Cyrus's reign actually heralded the end of the seventy years.³⁰ Africanus was also in error about the date of the first year of his rule. In the book of Ezra, Africanus found a notice at the very beginning of the work identifying the first year of his reign with the restoration of the Jews from captivity (Ezra 1:1–3). Misled by this reference, Africanus mistakenly, albeit understandably, confused the first year of Cyrus's rule with his defeat of the Babylonians some twenty-two years later.

That was a failure of interpretation, not of method. From this point of intersection, Africanus then began the painstaking task of tracing a comparative chronology of Greek and Jewish history, ending with Moses and the Exodus. Along the way, Africanus provided synchronistic notices for chronological landmarks. For biblical history from the end of the Captivity back to the Exodus, Africanus counted a total of 1235 years.³¹ Numbering the parallel years of Greek history was relatively unimpeded as long as he had Olympiad dating to guide him. By Africanus's reckoning, king Achaz ascended to the throne in Ol. 1,1.³² For pre-Olympiad chronology, however, Greek record-keeping soon descended into a state of complete confusion; following the consensus view, Africanus characterizes events in this period as “*μυθώδεις ιστορίας*” (in Eusebius, *Praep. ev.* 10.10.2). From these muddled and contradictory sources, Africanus had to find reliable local chronicles. Unlike his predecessors, Africanus preferred Attic to Argive chronology. Based on the Atthidographers Hellanicus and Philochorus and even more reliable later sources, Africanus determined that the flood at the time of Ogygus, the oldest recorded event in Attic history, occurred 1020 years before Ol. 1,1, in the same year as the Exodus.³³

³⁰ See below, p. 62.

³¹ The numbers found in the text of Eusebius (*Praep. ev.* 10.10.10) are probably a correction aimed at reconciling Africanus's reckoning with Olympiad years. From Ol. 1,1 to Ol. 55,1 (= 1 Cyrus), Africanus counted only 215 years. The text of Eusebius corrects this number to 217 years, and accordingly assigns 1237 years for the duration of time from the Exodus to 1 Cyrus.

³² In Syncellus 233.13–17.

³³ As his authorities for the 1020 years from the Ogygean flood to Ol. 1,1, Africanus names the Atthidographers, Castor and Thallus, Diodorus, and “some writers of our own (*καθ' ἡμᾶς*)” (in Eusebius, *Praep. ev.* 10.10.8). The reference to “writers of our own” suggests that Christian chronographers before him had already studied Attic chronology.

In both its method and findings, Africanus's chronology marked a significant departure from the prevailing convention. Arriving at his conclusions chiefly on the basis of Attic and biblical chronology, Africanus makes at best secondary use of Argive and Egyptian sources. After determining by his own independent calculations that Ogygus was king of Attica at the time of the Exodus, Africanus does note, on the authority of Acusilaeus, that Phoroneus, Inachus's successor, was king of Argos at the time.³⁴ But he says this only as an afterthought, based on a tradition and not independent reckoning. And while he cites with approval the findings of Apion and Ptolemy of Mendes on the date of the Exodus, Egyptian chronology is no longer the necessary *tertium quid*. The chief use he makes of Egyptian sources is ethnographic. Against a local Attic tradition making Ogygus an autochthonous king, he states, on the authority of "Theopompus and others," that the Athenians were actually migrants from Egypt. Africanus was happy to report the tradition, because it made a fitting theological coda to his disquisition on chronology. At the same time that God was scourging the Egyptians, he was also destroying Attica in a flood—fitting punishment, he writes, against a people ancestrally tied to the Egyptians.³⁵

My last observation deals not with Africanus's actual conclusions, but rather with the way he frames the question. Africanus does not think like an apologist. Once the earliest generation of Christian apologists had established that Moses lived at a time that the Greeks had consigned to the mythic or ahistoric period of their own past, they had achieved their objective; nothing more needed to be said. But for Africanus, that same discovery raised a celebrated problem of method in the tradition of Greek universal historiography. If, even for relatively recent events, Greek records soon dissolved into myth and chronological chaos, how could anyone write a unified history of the world using primary sources that were so uneven and contradictory?

Historians of the Hellenistic age thought at length about this matter. In the first book of his *Bibliotheca*, Diodorus Siculus raises the problem, and then steers clear of it. There are too many nations making conflicting claims about their past to decide which ones "are prior in point of time to the rest and by how many years." Besides, intermingling historical material from various peoples into a single narrative would

³⁴ In Syncellus 71.23–26.

³⁵ Eusebius, *Praep. ev.* 10.10.21–22 (= Syncellus 72.27–73.3).

only confuse readers. The only responsible approach, therefore, is to treat each one separately.³⁶ Universal chroniclers, on the other hand, could not be satisfied with this evasion. Readers rightly expected from them at least some effort at harmonization. That is what led Castor of Rhodes, for example, to take the bold step that he did. In his chronicle, Castor synchronized the rule of Aegialeus, the first recorded king of Sicyon, with the Assyrian king Ninus, a ruler regarded by Greek universal historians and chroniclers as the oldest recorded king of Asia.

Given the mixed quality of the source material, is a universal chronicle possible? This question, and not the aims of Jewish/Christian apologetic, was uppermost in Africanus's mind. In the first book of his chronicle, he considers the problem of harmonizing biblical chronology with the records of the Babylonians, Egyptians, and Phoenicians. The task, he concludes, is a fruitless one. No amount of manipulation, however resourceful, could squeeze sources of such enormous scope into the "more modest" chronology of the Jews.³⁷ But when, in the third book, Africanus proceeds to comparative biblical and Greek chronology, he confronts a very different challenge. Mindful of the substantive difference between his Jewish and Greek sources, especially for pre-Olympiad history, Africanus warns his readers not to expect completely balanced and symmetrical comparisons. While he will only touch on (ἐφαπτόμενος) events of the Greek past, Jewish history will receive a much richer treatment. Even so, readers can be assured that almost nothing essential has been left out of the narrative. If, for the 1020 years of Greek pre-history before the Olympiads, "anything noteworthy comes to our attention," he writes, "it shall be selected in accordance with its value."³⁸ In the hands of someone like Tatian, these observations about the poverty of Greek sources and the chronological priority of Moses and the Exodus would have made fodder for a polemic against Greek culture. For Africanus, they were the foundation of his historiographic method.

³⁶ Diodorus Siculus 1.9.3–5.

³⁷ In Syncellus 18.5–6. Notably, Africanus refers here to Egyptian chronographers who had tried to bring their native chronicles into harmony with the chronology of the *Timaeus* 23E, by claiming that the primitive Egyptian year represented some smaller interval of time. This suggests that the antiquity of Egyptian civilization, while an asset in cultural propaganda, was a problem for native chroniclers interested in comparative Greek/Egyptian chronology.

³⁸ In Eusebius, *Praep. ev.* 10.10.8.

SQUARING THE CIRCLE: APOLOGETIC AND CHRONOGRAPHY
AFTER AFRICANUS

Africanus seems to have recognized that his own conclusions put him at odds with the older tradition. Whatever differences exist on the matter of the date of Moses and the Exodus, he writes, are not “even worthy of comment.”³⁹ A writer more attuned to the finer points of apologetic might have disagreed. For Tatian and Clement, synchronizing the Exodus with the reigns of Inachus and Amosis was critical to their claim that Moses preceded all the major events of Greek history, including the flood of Ogygus.⁴⁰ Africanus’s own findings now proved them wrong.

Africanus’s own efforts to diminish the differences between himself and the prevailing consensus only accentuated them. He asserts, for example, that his own findings confirmed the older view that the Exodus occurred during the reign of the Egyptian king Amosis.⁴¹ The early ninth-century Byzantine chronicler George Syncellus shrewdly pointed out that Africanus’s own chronology actually proved the opposite. If Africanus was right and the Exodus occurred at the time of Ogygus and Phoroneus, then Moses was still a young man during Amosis’s reign.⁴² Africanus himself may have recognized the discrepancy: his version of Manetho’s list of Egyptian kings conspicuously omits the years of Amosis’s reign.⁴³ Why he insisted on retaining vestiges of the older tradition that were invalidated by his own dating is uncertain. But Syncellus was probably right in suggesting that the synchronism between the Exodus and the reign of Amosis was so deeply entrenched in the older tradition of Christian apologetic that Africanus thought it necessary to defer to it.⁴⁴

Over time, the difficulties of reconciling the demands of apologetic with the more exacting standards and methods of chronography deepened. Although some apologists and universal chronicles continued

³⁹ In Syncellus 72.15 (= Eusebius, *Praep. ev.* 10.10.19).

⁴⁰ Tatian, *Orat.* 39.2; see also Clement, *Strom.* 1.21.102.

⁴¹ In Syncellus 70.10–12. See also the notice of Amosis’s reign in Africanus’s version of Manetho. To this notice Africanus adds the following comment: “during his reign Moses left from Egypt, as we can show” (in Syncellus 76.29–30).

⁴² Syncellus 76.29–31; 78.10–13; 79.15–20.

⁴³ In Syncellus 76.29–31. According to Eusebius’s version of Manetho, Amosis’s reign lasted twenty-five years; see Syncellus 77.10–11 (= Eusebius, *Chron.* 1.68.3–4).

⁴⁴ Syncellus 69.24–70.4.

to prefer the older tradition, the Moses-Amosis-Inachus synchronism capitulated under the pressure of disconfirming evidence. Those apologists who did adopt Africanus's chronology initially tried to domesticate his findings for their own purposes, sometimes at the cost of distorting them. The *Cohortatio* of Pseudo-Justin, a work apparently familiar with his work, reveals little interest in the originality of his conclusions or the sophisticated methodology underlying his comparative Greek and Hebrew chronology. What mainly concerns the author is the value of Africanus's study in confirming the superior antiquity of Moses (9.1–3).⁴⁵ In Tertullian's *Apology* we can see the first rumblings of disillusionment with the whole field of chronography. After repeating the time-honored Moses-Inachus synchronism, Tertullian acknowledges that to do full justice to the intricacies of the whole subject would require a separate treatise. This, he says, would be irrelevant and pedantic work, "requiring the anxious study of many books, and the fingers' busy reckoning."⁴⁶ His statement conveys more than a little impatience with a discipline that was moving beyond the reach of everyone but specialists.

No other writer better exemplifies the strain of balancing the apologetic and the analytical demands of chronography than Eusebius himself.⁴⁷ Because of his treatment of comparative chronology of Moses and the Exodus in the *Praeparatio Evangelica*, scholars usually put Eusebius in the camp of the apologists. But it would be wrong to generalize about Eusebius's motives purely on the basis of the discussion in the *Praeparatio*. Earlier in his career, Eusebius had written on the same subject of Moses' date in his *Chronicon*. And in this work, Eusebius, after a thorough and independent inquiry of his own, reaches a surprisingly original conclusion: the Exodus actually occurred *much later* than anyone had previously supposed. If Eusebius's motives were strictly partisan, this seems counterintuitive.

⁴⁵ Ps.-Justin, *Cohortatio ad Graecos; De Monarchia; Oratio Ad Graecos* (ed. M. Marcovich; PTS 32; Berlin: de Gruyter, 1990). For Ps.-Justin's use of Africanus, see E. Schürer, "Julius Africanus als Quelle der Pseudo-Justin'schen Cohortatio ad Graecos," *ZKG* 2 (1878): 319–31; B. Garstad, "Theophilus of Antioch, Ps.-Justin and Thallus' Treatment of Moses," in *Papers Presented at the Thirteenth International Conference on Patristic Studies Held in Oxford* (ed. E. Yarnold, M. Wiles, and P. M. Parvis; Louvain: Peeters, 2001), 208.

⁴⁶ Tertullian, *Apol.* 19.2–7 (for Latin text and French translation, see *Tertullien, Apologetique* [ed. J.-P. Waltzing; Paris: Société d'Édition "les Belles Lettres," 1929]).

⁴⁷ The discussion that follows elaborates on my previous article, "Eusebius' Critique of Africanus," in *Julius Africanus und die Christliche Weltchronistik* (ed. M. Wallraff; TU 157; Berlin/New York: de Gruyter, 2006), 150–54; see also Sirinelli, *Les vues historiques*, 512–15.

In many respects, Eusebius's systematic approach to the question in the *Chronicon* mirrors that of Africanus. Like Africanus, he decides on the end of the Babylonian captivity as a chronologically fixed point in Greek and Jewish history from which to trace a comparative Greco-Jewish chronology back to the time of Moses and the Exodus. But he is not content simply to rehearse Africanus's research. If, as Africanus had claimed, the end of the Babylonian captivity occurred in the first year of Cyrus's reign, why, in the second year of the reign of Darius, was Zechariah still appealing to God to put an end to Israel's suffering (Zech 1:12)? On the assumption that the second year of Darius's reign (= Ol. 65,1) marked the *terminus ad quem* of Jeremiah's prophecy, Eusebius concludes that Africanus's reckoning of the dates of the prophecy was forty years too early.⁴⁸ Nor was Eusebius content with Africanus's chronology of the preexilic period. In a rather caustic appraisal of his predecessor's reckoning, he proves that the 744 years that Africanus had assigned to the period from the Exodus to the building of Solomon's temple was grossly overstated. After making the necessary adjustments, Eusebius determined that everyone who had written before him about Moses' antiquity was in error. Moses was not a contemporary of Inachus, Phoroneus, or Ogygus. He lived much later, during the reign of the Attic king Cecrops.⁴⁹

The analysis leading to this conclusion shows little deference to tradition and received wisdom. In counting the years of the era of the judges, Eusebius acknowledges the aid of Jewish informants; from them, he had learned that the judges and the Philistines sometimes ruled jointly.⁵⁰ This explanation of the years of the judges in the Hebrew Bible he finds preferable to that of the Septuagint and the apostle Paul. In matters of chronology, Eusebius writes, Paul was an unreliable guide. The 450 years that he assigned to the period of the judges in Acts 13:19–20 was a popularly held, but inexact, estimate.⁵¹ Africanus himself comes in for the harshest criticism. To accept his

⁴⁸ By Eusebius's reckoning, the seventy years began with Nebuchadnezzar's destruction of Jerusalem and ended in 2 Darius (= Ol. 65,1), 264 years from Ol. 1,1; see *Canons* 100^a, 103^b.

⁴⁹ Eusebius, *Canons* 41^c. For the details of this analysis, see *Canons*, Praef. 9.11–12.5; *Praep. ev.* 10.9.1–10.

⁵⁰ Eusebius, *Chron.* 1.50.3–15; on this method of counting the years of the judges, see *Seder 'Olam: The Rabbinic View of Biblical Chronology* (trans. H. W. Guggenheimer; Northvale, N.J.: Jason Aronson, 1998), 120–28.

⁵¹ Eusebius, *Chron.* 1.50.17–23; cf. Acts 13:19–21.

claim that 744 years had elapsed from the Exodus to the building of Solomon's temple would mean that each of the five generations of Judahites from the Exodus up to David lived on average 140 years. "No rational person (οὐκ ἄν τις ἐν φρονῶν)," Eusebius writes, could possibly endorse such thinking.⁵²

This pronouncement is far removed from the praise that he later heaps upon Africanus in the *Praeparatio*. In order to create a sense of unassailable consensus, Eusebius now includes Africanus in an imposing array of "men of learning," who "after an accurate examination of the present subject, had defended the antiquity of the Hebrews."⁵³ Through their testimony, he writes, "the maintenance of the truth will receive indisputable confirmation not by one witness, but by many."⁵⁴ While he knows that the date of Moses and the Exodus was hardly a fixed datum, Eusebius minimizes the variations, dwelling instead on their "common consent and agreement."⁵⁵ Even the reviled Porphyry earns a share of credit. Although Eusebius was convinced that Porphyry's dating of Moses was erroneous, he writes at length about the implications of his findings, assuming, if only for the sake of argument, that they are true. It is not difficult to understand why. Of all the writers who had written on the subject, Porphyry had dated Moses the earliest, during the time of Sanchuniathon, a contemporary of the Assyrian queen Semiramis. For Eusebius the apologist, a finding like this from an avowed enemy of the Church was a gift of incalculable value—"a confession of truth from our enemies."⁵⁶

While the *Praeparatio* does not renounce his earlier "novel discovery" about the age of Moses, Eusebius now adds it to the vast corpus of sound scholarship attesting to Moses' antiquity. We can imagine that after the publication of the first edition of the *Chronicon*, Eusebius came to a deeper appreciation of the broader political ramifications of chronology. Later editions of his chronicle reveal the same heightened sensitivities. It is generally understood that the version of the second book of Eusebius's *Chronicle* underlying Jerome's translation was a later

⁵² Eusebius, *Chron.* 1.47.6–48.8. For the Greek text of Eusebius's critique, see Ἐκλογή τῶν ἱστοριῶν, in *Anecdota graeca e codd. manuscriptis bibliothecae regiae parisiensis* (ed. J. A. Cramer; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1839; repr. Hildesheim, 1967), 2.177.17–178.19.

⁵³ Eusebius, *Praep. ev.* 10.9.26.

⁵⁴ Eusebius, *Praep. ev.* 10.9.28.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

⁵⁶ Eusebius, *Praep. ev.* 10.9.11.

edition, composed sometime after the vicennalia of Constantine's reign.⁵⁷ In my view, the later date of this version is underscored by the discussion of the date of Moses in the prologue to this edition of the *Canons*.

Although the date of Moses is hardly the central focus of the *Canons*, Eusebius chooses to begin the prologue to the work with a detailed discussion of the history of research on this question and his own contributions to this subject. After the appearance of the first edition of the chronicle, the subject must have been weighing heavily upon him. Similar in tone and contents to the *Praeparatio*, the prologue reads like an exercise in damage control. Given Porphyry's own views about Moses' antiquity, Eusebius's gratuitous swipe at the "impious Porphyry" comes across as an attempt to shore up his credentials as a defender of the Church against its enemies.⁵⁸ He gives the false impression that all of his predecessors were in agreement in their dating of Moses.⁵⁹ Notably absent is the incisive criticism of Africanus that we find in the first book of his chronicle. As with the *Praeparatio*, Africanus now joins the ranks of all the "highly learned men" (*eruditissimi uiri*) who had written on this theme.⁶⁰

Eusebius speaks with obvious pride of his own original analysis of the question. But then, as if aware of the potential damage of his findings to the interests of the Church, he reasserts his role as Christian advocate. Even if Moses lived later than commonly thought, Eusebius claims to have vindicated the traditional view that he was still older than all the celebrated persons and events of Greek history and mythology.⁶¹ That piece of revisionism turned out to be false. Syncellus, a close reader and critic of Eusebius, later pointed out that this statement misrepres-

⁵⁷ See A. A. Mosshammer, *Eusebius and Greek Chronographic Tradition* (Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 1979), 37–38, 67–75; T. D. Barnes, *Constantine and Eusebius* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1981), 113.

⁵⁸ Eusebius, *Canons*, Praef. 8.1–3. For evidence in support of the view that the polemic against Porphyry was lacking in the first edition of Eusebius's chronicle, see also Barnes, *Constantine and Eusebius*, 113.

⁵⁹ Eusebius, *Canons*, Praef. 7.13–17. Eusebius states here that Clement, Africanus, Tatian, Josephus, and Justus of Tiberias all dated Moses in the time of Inachus. What Eusebius says about Africanus is technically true, but misleading. Unlike Tatian and Clement's dating of the Exodus during the time of Inachus, Africanus dated the Exodus during the reign of Phoroneus. As we have seen, by Africanus's reckoning, Moses was still a young man during Inachus's reign.

⁶⁰ Eusebius, *Canons*, Praef. 7.14.

⁶¹ Eusebius, *Canons*, Praef. 9.11–10.1.

sented the *Canons*; anyone reading it carefully would readily see that, by Eusebius's own reckoning, several events of the Greek past actually predated Moses.⁶² At least in this case, Eusebius would have been better served had he respected the integrity of his own earlier findings enough to let them stand or fall on their merits.

⁶² Syncellus 75.16–24.

PART TWO

THE NEW TESTAMENT IN CONTEXT

TURNING TO GOD:
CONVERSION IN GREEK-SPEAKING JUDAISM
AND EARLY CHRISTIANITY

Gregory E. Sterling

The story of Christianity's growth in the early centuries of our era is remarkable by any standard of measurement: it grew from an insignificant Jewish renewal movement numbering several hundred to an estimated five million by 300 CE.¹ At the same time that it grew numerically, it advanced socially: it evolved from a culturally despised movement in the East to an empire-wide movement with adherents scattered throughout all levels of society and was poised to become the official religion of the Roman Empire.² Although the success of the movement might suggest a strategic plan, the only known organized mission during the first three centuries was the Pauline mission whose story was told by an admirer at the end of the first century.³

Predictably, conversion played a prominent role in the story of the Pauline mission and in the accounts of its more spontaneous predecessors. Far less predictably, the concept of conversion is never explained; rather, the author assumed that the implied reader already understood it. The closest that we come to a description of conversion is the summary of Paul's preaching in his defense before Herod Agrippa II: "For this reason, King Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision but I proclaimed first to those in Damascus, then to those in Jerusalem, then to the entire countryside of Judea, and to the Gentiles that they should repent and turn to God (μετανοεῖν καὶ ἐπιστρέφειν ἐπὶ τὸν θεόν), performing deeds worthy of repentance (ἄξια τῆς μετανοίας

¹ R. MacMullen, *Christianizing the Roman Empire: A.D. 100–400* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1984), 32.

² One of the first significant (and paradoxical) signs of the increasing importance of Christianity was Celsus' critique in *True Doctrine*. It marks the first time that a pagan intellectual took Christianity seriously, even if he accused Christians of belonging to and preying upon the marginal groups of the empire, e.g., Origen, *Cels.* 3.55; cf. also 3.44. This was a common charge against early Christians. So Lucian, *Peregr.* 13 and Minucius Felix, *Oct.* 8.4.

³ MacMullen, *Christianizing the Roman Empire*, 34, points out that Paul's mission was the only organized effort in the early centuries.

ἔργα πρᾶσσοντας).⁴ The combination of monotheism and morality in this summary is remarkably similar to the definition of conversion that Ramsay MacMullen offered in his study of early Christianity's growth. He defined conversion as "that change of belief by which a person accepted the reality and supreme power of God and determined to obey Him."⁵ The congruence between our contemporary understanding of conversion and that of Luke might suggest that the understanding was common coin; however, this would be misleading.⁶ It is more correct to say that the early Christian understanding of conversion shaped later Christian perceptions. Did an earlier understanding of conversion shape the way that early Christians understood the concept? I propose to answer this question by surveying the basic bodies of literature that speak of conversion.

There are two preliminary matters that we need to address. First, we need to offer a more nuanced understanding of conversion.⁷ Lewis Rambo has suggested that there are five "ideal types" of conversion: tradition transition (a shift from one major religious tradition to another); institutional transition (a movement from one community to another within the same tradition); affiliation (an alignment with little or no commitment); intensification (a revitalized commitment to a tradition to which the individual had a previous affiliation); and apostasy or defec-

⁴ Acts 26:19–20. All translations are my own.

⁵ MacMullen, *Christianizing the Roman Empire*, 5. Cf. also A. D. Nock, *Conversion: The Old and New in Religion from Alexander the Great to Augustine of Hippo* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1933; repr., Lanham, Md.: University Press of America, 1988), 7: "By conversion we mean the reorientation of the soul of an individual, his deliberate turning from indifference or from an earlier form of piety to another, a turning which implies a consciousness that a great change is involved, that the old was wrong and the new is right."

⁶ I will call the author "Luke", although I think that the author was a third-generation Christian who knew Luke, a second-generation Christian and sometime traveling companion of Paul, a first-generation Christian.

⁷ There are a number of treatments of conversion in the New Testament, e.g., B. R. Gaventa, *From Darkness to Light: Aspects of Conversion in the New Testament* (OBT 20; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1986); R. D. Witherup, *Conversion in the New Testament* (Zachaeus Studies: New Testament; Collegeville, Minn.: Liturgical, 1994); R. V. Peace, *Conversion in the New Testament: Paul and the Twelve* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999), who concentrates on Paul and Mark; and Z. A. Crook, *Reconceptualising Conversion: Patronage, Loyalty, and Conversion in the Religions of the Ancient Mediterranean* (BZNW 130; Berlin/New York: Walter de Gruyter, 2004), who argues that the understanding of conversion has been too heavily influenced by psychology and should be understood in terms of the patron-client relationship.

tion.⁸ I will use these categories to distinguish among the perspectives of the texts that we will examine. Second, the possible ways that we can survey ancient material are somewhat limited. For example, we could survey conversion stories from antiquity; however, the number of conversion stories is too limited to permit a satisfactory analysis.⁹ I have chosen to concentrate on texts that discuss conversion by using the same language as Luke-Acts, especially the cognates ἐπιστρέφω and ἐπιστροφή, μετανοέω and μετάνοια, as well as μεταβάλλω and μεταβολή that are not part of Luke's vocabulary but are common in other authors. These word groups have a much wider range of meaning than conversion. We will only examine texts where they designate a reorientation of life.¹⁰ It is a pleasure to offer this essay in honor of Carl Holladay, whose friendship and scholarship have made a significant difference in my life.

HELLENISTIC PHILOSOPHY

We begin with Hellenistic philosophers.¹¹ It is well known that the Stoics did not think that a wise person should repent. Zeno, the founder of the Stoa, is reported to have said: "The wise person guesses nothing, repents of nothing (*nullius rei paenitere*), commits no error, and never changes his opinion."¹² This stance is repeated by a significant number of later Stoic thinkers including all of the major representatives of the so-called Late Stoa: Seneca,¹³ Epictetus,¹⁴ and Marcus Aurelius.¹⁵

⁸ L. A. Rambo, "Conversion," *ER* 1:74–75; and idem, *Understanding Religious Conversion* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993), 12–14.

⁹ It would be possible within Christian sources, but is more problematic in non-Christian traditions. There are some notable exceptions: Apuleius, *Metam.* 11 and the royal family of Adiabene in Josephus, *Ant.* 20.34–48, 75.

¹⁰ For more extensive surveys of the language and texts among recent works see J. N. Bailey, "Repentance in Luke-Acts" (Ph.D. diss., The University of Notre Dame, 1993), 28–121; G. D. Nave, Jr., *The Role and Function of Repentance in Luke-Acts* (AcadBib 4; Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2002), 39–144; and F. Méndez-Moratalla, *The Paradigm of Conversion in Luke* (JSNTSup 252; London: T & T Clark, 2004), 23–70.

¹¹ For surveys of conversion among philosophers see Nock, *Conversion*, 164–86 and Méndez-Moratalla, *The Paradigm of Conversion in Luke*, 56–70.

¹² Cicero, *Mur.* 61. Cf. also *SVF* 3.147.20–23. I have used the LCL editions of classical authors unless otherwise noted.

¹³ Seneca, *Ben.* 4.34; 7.2.2.

¹⁴ Epictetus *Diatr.* 2.22.35; *Ench.* 34.

¹⁵ Marcus Aurelius 1.7; 8.2, 10.

Seneca put it this way: “The wise person does not change his plan when everything remains as it was when he formulated it. Regret (*paenitentia*) never possess him because at that time nothing better could have been done than was done and nothing better could have been planned than was planned.”¹⁶ Seneca’s formulation is worth noting. Like Zeno, he insisted that the wise person does not regret decisions; unlike Zeno, he qualified the decisions as the best made given the available information and circumstances at the time of the decision. The basic point is nonetheless the same: the wise have no regrets.

This is not, however, true for everyone. Stoics did allow for progress, especially in connection with a rebuke. Seneca wrote: “The most reliable change towards integrity comes from repentance (*ex paenitentia*).”¹⁷ Plutarch, who used Aristotelian psychology to criticize the Stoics in his treatise *On Moral Virtue*, recognized the value of repentance in connection with regret: “It is possible to see these themselves sometimes provoking young men with praises and sometimes punishing them with admonitions. Of these, pleasure follows one and grief the other. For admonition and rebuke produce repentance (μετάνοια) and shame. Of these, one is a type of pain and the other a type of fear.” He adds: “They use these for improvements (among the young men).”¹⁸ These statements demonstrate that repentance had a place in ancient psychagogy. In particular, it was considered a form of pain stemming from a rebuke that led to a reformation. The concept was widespread and popular.¹⁹ The apostle Paul expressed the thought as clearly as anyone in the ancient world in his second letter to the Corinthians: “Even if I grieved you in my letter, I do not regret it, even if I did regret it. For I see that that letter grieved you—even if temporarily. But now I rejoice, not because you were grieved but because you were grieved to repentance (εἰς μετάνοιαν). For you were divinely grieved so that you would not suffer any loss from us.” He explained: “For divine grief produces an unregrettable repentance that leads to salvation (μετάνοιαν εἰς σωτηρίαν ἀμεταμέλητον), but the grief of the world produces death.”²⁰

¹⁶ Seneca, *Ben.* 4.34 (*SVF* 3.149.32–34).

¹⁷ Seneca, *Nat.* 3 *Praef.* 3. Cf. also *Ira* 3.36.1–4; *Ep.* 28.9–10.

¹⁸ Plutarch, *Mor.* 452C–D. Cf. also 26D, 27A, 204A, 712C.

¹⁹ For a survey of texts that accentuate the regret that accompanies μετάνοια see Nave, *The Role and Function of Repentance in Luke-Acts*, 48–60.

²⁰ 2 Cor 7:8–10.

The most important treatment of repentance or conversion in a philosophical text appears in a Cynic treatise attributed to Cebes, a member of the Socratic circle who played a prominent role in the *Phaedo* of Plato.²¹ The *Tabula* is an ἔκφρασις (description) of a votive tablet cast in the form of a dialogue.²² The dialogue personifies virtues and vices. In the course of the latter it depicts the vices as prostitutes and warns of the punishments that will follow.²³ One of these is unhappiness, presented as a house where the unfortunate person is kept. “Here he will spend the remainder of his life in complete unhappiness unless Repentance by her own choice meets him.” The personification of μετάνοια as a virtue introduces a new possibility: “Then what happens if Repentance meets him. She takes him out of his troubles and introduces him to another Opinion (and Desire) that leads to True Education and, at the same time, to another that leads to so-called False Education.” The two educations, True Education and False Education, constitute the two possibilities for an individual that will be described in the remainder of the dialogue.²⁴ Repentance is the pivotal virtue that brings the individual to the crossroads of life. “If ... he accepts this Opinion that will lead him to True Education, he will be purified by her and saved. He will be blessed and happy in his life. But if not, he is again led astray by False Opinion.”²⁵ Repentance is thus the occasion for a reorientation of life.²⁶ There is no change without it: the individual remains trapped in the house of unhappiness.

These texts make it clear that some Hellenistic moral philosophers recognized repentance as a virtue. It represents the moment of truth when the individual must choose between continuing on a course that has been shown to be wrong or reorienting her or his life to a new course. Hierocles of Alexandria captured the thrust of this view when he wrote: “Repentance (μετάνοια) is the very beginning of philosophy:

²¹ On Cebes see Plato, *Phaed.* 61D–E, 78A; *Crito* 45B. I have used the edition of J. T. Fitzgerald and L. M. White, eds., *The Tabula of Cebes* (SBLIT 24/Graeco-Roman Religion Series 7; Chico, Calif.: Scholars Press, 1983).

²² For ancient examples of an ἔκφρασις, see the description of Rome based on a *Dea Roma* coin in Rev 17:1–18, esp. 1–6 and the description of a woman in Lucian, *Imag.* D. E. Aune, *Revelation* (3 vols.; WBC 52a, b, c; Dallas: Word, 1997; Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1998), 3:919–28, has an analysis of the ἔκφρασις in the Apocalypse.

²³ Pseudo-Cebes, *Tab.* 5–6, Deceit; 7–8, Pleasure; 9, Vices as prostitutes; 10, punishment.

²⁴ Pseudo-Cebes, *Tab.* 12–14, Pseudopaideia; 15–24, True paideia and happiness.

²⁵ Pseudo-Cebes, *Tab.* 10.4–11.

²⁶ Lucian, *Merc. cond.* 42, has a parody of this scene in Pseudo-Cebes in which he makes it clear that he thinks that repentance as regret is worthless.

the flight from both senseless deeds and words and the first preparation for a life that is without regret.”²⁷ If we apply Rambo’s categories to these texts, the psychagogical statements appear to fall within the sphere of intensification. Pseudo-Cebes, on the other hand, appears to refer to tradition transition, that is, conversion to the philosophical life. Overtures to the philosophical life were typically made through *protreptikoi*; Cicero’s lost *Hortensius* is the most famous example but there were a number of other noteworthy examples.²⁸ This is similar to the second element of Acts 26:20, but not to the first. At least these texts do not link their ethical turn to monotheism.²⁹ We need to look at Jewish texts to find this connection.

SECOND TEMPLE JEWISH TEXTS

LXX. It is important to begin with the LXX.³⁰ The Greek translators used two sets of terms for repentance/conversion: ἐπιστρέφω/ἐπιστροφή and μετανοέω/μετάνοια. The verb ἐπιστρέφω is easily the most common term: there are approximately 576 entries in the Hatch and Redpath concordance.³¹ There are only seven occurrences of the cognate noun. While the two have a range of meanings, the verb can be used metaphorically to designate a turning to God.³² For example,

²⁷ Hierocles of Alexandria, *Commentary on the Golden Chain* 14:27–29, in F. W. A. Mullach, ed., *Fragmenta Philosophorum Graecorum* (3 vols.; Paris: Firmin-Didot, 1881–83; repr., Aalen: Scientia, 1968), 1:451–52.

²⁸ Diogenes Laertius mentioned a number of lost *protreptikoi*. These included examples from the most of the major traditions. He attributed *protreptikoi* to the following figures in the Peripatetic movement: Aristotle (DL 5.22 and Stobaeus 4.32.21), Theophrastus (DL 5.49), Demetrius of Phaleron (DL 5.81), Ariston of Ceos (DL 7.163). He mentioned two Cynic authors of *protreptikoi*: Antisthenes (DL 6.16) and Monimus (DL 7.83). He provided the names of three Stoics: Persaeus (DL 7.36), Cleanthes (DL 7.175), Posidonius (DL 7.91, 129). Plutarch, *Mor.* 1041E, attributed a *protreptikos* to Chrysippus.

²⁹ Monotheism was by no means restricted to Judaism and Christianity in the ancient world. See P. Athanassiadi and M. Frede, eds., *Pagan Monotheism in Late Antiquity* (Oxford: Clarendon; New York: Oxford University Press, 1999).

³⁰ For surveys see Bailey, “Repentance in Luke-Acts,” 30–35, and Nave, *The Role and Function of Repentance in Luke-Acts*, 111–18.

³¹ There is a good deal of variation in the manuscript tradition: manuscripts often use ἀποστρέφω or ὑποστρέφω instead of ἐπιστρέφω.

³² Deut 4:30, 39; 30:2, 8, 10; 1 Kgdms 7:3; 3 Kgdms 8:33, 47, 48; 13:33; 4 Kgdms 23:25; 2 Para 6:24, 26, 37 (*bis*), 38; 15:4; 19:4; 24:19; 30:6, 9 (*bis*); 33:19; 2 Esd 11:9 (= Neh 1:9); 19:26, 29 (= Neh 9:26, 29); Tob 13:6; 14:6; Judith 5:19; Job 22:23; 33:23; 36:10; Pss 7:13 (12); 21:28 (22:27); 50:15 (51:13); 77:34 (78:34); 84:9 (85:8); Sir 5:7; 17:25, 29;

in the prayer placed on the lips of Solomon at the temple dedication, the Deuteronomist said: “(if) they turn their hearts (ἐπιστρέψουσιν καρδίας αὐτῶν) in the land where they have been taken there, and they turn (ἐπιστρέψουσιν) and ask you in the land of their exile saying, ‘We have sinned, we have acted lawlessly, we have acted unjustly’, and they turn to you (ἐπιστρέψουσιν πρὸς σέ) with their whole heart and with their whole soul...” (3 Kgs 8:47–48). Interestingly, Ben Sira uses the verb and noun exclusively for turning to God; he is the only author to use ἐπιστροφή in this way.³³ In other cases it is used in a two-way relationship in which humans are called upon to turn to God who will turn to them.³⁴ Conversely, it can also mean to turn away from God or turn to other gods.³⁵ The majority of these texts use the verb for intensification rather than tradition transition. However, the idea of turning away from God to other gods, also implies the possibility of turning from other gods to the God of Israel.

There are a handful of texts that take this possibility up. In a series of statements that mix descriptions of the Egyptian diaspora with universalistic sentiments, Isaiah said: “the Lord will strike the Egyptians with a great blow and will heal them with a healing. They will turn to the Lord (ἐπιστραφήσονται πρὸς κύριον); he will hear them and heal them.”³⁶ While this might refer to the Jewish diaspora in Egypt,³⁷ a later statement in Isaiah is explicit in its address to the nations: “Turn to me (ἐπιστράφητε πρὸς με) and be saved, you who are from the end of the earth. I am God and there is no other” (Isa 45:22; cf. 45:20–25).

18:13; 21:6; Hos 3:5; 6:1; 7:10; 12:7 (6); 14:2, 3; Amos 4:6, 8, 9, 10, 11; Joel 2:12, 13, 14; Hag 2:17 (18); Zech 1:3; Mal 2:6 (?); 3:7; Isa 6:10; 19:22; 31:6; 44:22; 45:22; 46:8; 55:6; Jer 3:10, 12, 14, 22 (*bis*); 4:1 (*bis*); 8:5; 9:4 (3); 12:17; 15:19; 18:8; 24:7; 38(31):18 (*bis*); 41(34):10, 15; Bar 4:2, 28; Lam 3:40; 5:21; Ezek 14:6 (*bis*); 18:30.

³³ The verb appears in Sir 5:7; 17:25, 29; 18:13; 21:6. The noun occurs in 18:21 and 49:2.

³⁴ 2 Para 30:6; Tob 13:6; Zech 1:3; Mal 3:7; Jer 18:8.

³⁵ Deut 31:18, 20; 2 Esdras 9:14; Ps 77(78):41, 57; Jer 11:10; 41(34):16; Bar 2:30.

³⁶ Isa 19:22. See 19:16–25 for the statements about Egypt which are attached to an oracle against Egypt (19:1–15).

³⁷ The statement is one of five that begin with “on that day will be” (ביום ההוא יהיה) translated by τῇ ἡμέρᾳ ἐκεῖνῃ ἔσονται or τῇ ἡμέρᾳ ἐκεῖνῃ ἔσται. So Isa 19:16–17, 18, 19–22, 23, 24–25. For an analysis see J. Blenkinsopp, *Isaiah 1–39: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (AB 19; New York: Doubleday, 2000), 316–20.

Deutero-Isaiah is not the only voice in the Hebrew Bible to strike this chord: the psalmist can speak of the nations turning to God: “All the ends of the earth will remember and turn to the Lord (ἐπιστραφήσονται πρὸς κύριον); all the families of the nations will worship before you” (Ps 21:28 [22:27]). Finally, in Tobit’s farewell address to Tobias and his sons, a third-century BCE Jewish author rekindled the prophetic vision of Israel’s future including the conversion of the nations: “and all the nations will turn (ἐπιστρέψουσιν) to fear the Lord God in truth and will tear down their idols; all the nations will bless the Lord” (Tob 14:6). These statements are quite remarkable. They represent a prophetic vision of the future in which the nations will convert to the God of Israel. These are clear cases of tradition transition rather than intensification.

The related pair of terms, μετανοέω/μετάνοια, have a similar pattern except that they never refer to tradition transition.³⁸ The verb occurs some twenty times: it can refer to God and humans. Applications of the verb to God are complex: some texts state unequivocally that God does not μετανοεῖν³⁹ while others suggest that he does.⁴⁰ The references to humans are more straightforward: in Proverbs the words refer to regret/reflection;⁴¹ in all other texts they suggest repentance in the sense of intensification.⁴² The most interesting uses are the prophetic texts that juxtapose μετανοέω and ἐπιστρέφω.⁴³

The LXX thus provides two word groups for repentance/conversion. The most important of these is ἐπιστρέφω which normally refers to conversion as intensification, but can in a handful of texts with a universal vision refer to tradition transition. Two later Second Temple Jewish texts will illustrate both possibilities.

³⁸ It is worth noting that the LXX translators use μετανοέω to translate חָנַן rather than שׁוּב. The single exception is Isa 46:8, where μετανοέω is used as a parallel with ἐπιστρέφω.

³⁹ 1 Kgdms 15:29; Jer 4:28; Zech 8:4.

⁴⁰ Amos 7:3, 6; Joel 2:13, 14; Jonah 3:9, 10; 4:2; Jer 18:8, 10.

⁴¹ The verb is used this way in Prov 20:25; 24:52; the noun in Prov 14:15.

⁴² The verb conveys “repentance” in Wis 5:3; Sir 17:24; 48:15; Isa 46:8; Jer 8:6; 38(31):18–19; the noun in Wis 11:23; 12:10, 19; Sir 44:16.

⁴³ Isa 46:8; Jer 8:5–6; 38(31):18–19.

Prayer of Manasseh. The first is the *Prayer of Manasseh*.⁴⁴ The Deuteronomistic historians depicted Manasseh (698–642 BCE) as one of the most wicked Judean kings (cf. 2 Kgs 21:1–18); in fact, they laid the blame for the Neo-Babylonians' destruction of Jerusalem and exile of Judah at his feet (2 Kgs 21:10–16; 23:3–4). The Chronicler(s) recast his story in significant ways (2 Chron 33:1–20). According to Chronicles, the Assyrians took him into exile as punishment for his sins (2 Chron 33:10–11). While he was in exile, he humbled himself and prayed to God begging for forgiveness (2 Chron 33:12–13). Chronicles did not provide the text of the prayer, but claimed that it can be found in the *Words of the Seers*, an otherwise unknown work (2 Chron 33:19; cf. also 33:18). Open ends such as these proved irresistible to later writers who supplied the missing material. The date when the missing prayer was composed is unknown. The *terminus ad quem* is the third century CE when the prayer was incorporated into the *Didascalia Apostolorum*.⁴⁵ It was probably during the last two centuries BCE or first century CE that a Jewish author composed the prayer—possibly in Greek.⁴⁶ The close relation between the prayer and the narrative of Chronicles suggests that like the prayers in Esther, this prayer was composed as an addition to the text. However, unlike the prayers added to Esther (and Daniel), there is no evidence that this prayer ever became a part of the textual tradition of Chronicles. Instead, the prayer became part of an appendix to the Psalter that consists of hymns and prayers. These circulated in some manuscripts of the LXX beginning in the fifth century CE (e.g., Codex Alexandrinus and Codex Turicensis).

The prayer falls into three major parts. The first is an invocation of God that describes God as both terrifying and merciful (vv. 1–7). The

⁴⁴ I have used the edition of A. Rahlfs, *Psalmi cum odis* (Septuaginta: Vetus Testamentum Graecum 10; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1979³), 361–63. This has no relation to the prayer attributed to Manasseh in 4Q381 33, 8–11. See E. Schuller, *Non-Canonical Psalms from Qumran: A Pseudepigraphic Collection* (HSM 28; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1986), 150, 160–62. Recent treatments of the prayer include E. Oswald, “Gebet Manasses,” in *Poetische Schriften* (JSRZ 4.1; Gütersloher: G. Mohn, 1974), 15–27; J. H. Charlesworth, “Prayer of Manasseh,” in *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha* (ed. J. H. Charlesworth; 2 vols.; Garden City, New York: Doubleday, 1983–85), 2:625–33 (hereafter *OTP*); and A.-M. Denis, *Introduction à la littérature religieuse judéo-hellénistique* (2 vols.; Turnhout: Brepols, 2000), 1:659–79.

⁴⁵ The prayer from the *Didascalia Apostolorum* is preserved in the *Apostolic Constitutions* 2.22.12–15.

⁴⁶ The original language is a matter of debate. See Denis, *Introduction*, 1:678–79, for a summary of the arguments with bibliography.

second offers Manasseh's confession in response to God's anger (vv. 8–10). The third, which is marked off by the refrain "and now," picks up the motif of God's mercy as the king appealed for compassion (vv. 11–14). The prayer ends with a doxology (v. 15).

The relevant section of the text for our purposes is Manasseh's confession:

- (8) Therefore, you, Lord, God of the righteous,
have not established repentance (μετάνοια) for the righteous
—for Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob who did not sin against you—
but you have established repentance (μετάνοια) for me, a sinner.
- (9) For I have sinned more often than the sand of the sea;
my lawless acts, O Lord, have multiplied again and again.
I am unworthy to look up and to see the height of heaven
because of the host of my unrighteous acts,
- (10) because I am bent down by a great bond of iron
so that I cannot stand up straight because of my sins.
I have no relief,
for I have provoked your wrath.

The power of this confession has proven attractive to Christians through many centuries. As we have already noted, it appears in some third- and fourth-century manuals of church order, for example, in the Syriac translation of the *Didascalia Apostolorum* and in Greek in the *Constitutiones Apostolicae*. Perhaps the Christian appropriation of the prayer is one reason why it did not become part of the Jewish tradition. It is a clear model of repentance as intensification.

Joseph and Aseneth. The second text offers an unambiguous example of tradition transition.⁴⁷ Like the Chronicler's account of Manasseh, the biblical account of Joseph invited later expansions. Following Joseph's interpretation of Pharaoh's double dream and recommendation, Pharaoh elevated the Hebrew slave/prisoner to a position of

⁴⁷ There are two different recensions in the manuscript tradition: a long recension (C. Burchard, *Gesammelte Studien zu Joseph und Aseneth* [SVTP 13; Leiden/New York: Brill, 1996] and idem, *Joseph und Aseneth* [PVTG 5; Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2003]; the latter is the standard critical edition for the long recension) and a short recension (M. Philonenko, *Joseph et Aseneth: Introduction, texte critique, traduction et notes* [SBP 13; Leiden: Brill, 1968]). In recent years, several have argued for the short recension, e.g., R. S. Kraemer, *When Aseneth Met Joseph: A Late Antique Tale of the Biblical Patriarch and his Egyptian Wife, Reconsidered* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998). Burchard has responded in "The Text of *Joseph and Aseneth* Reconsidered," *JSP* 14 (2005): 83–96. Important translations and notes include C. Burchard, "Joseph and Aseneth," in *Unterweisung in erzählender Form* (JSHRZ 2.4; Gütersloher: G. Mohn, 1983); idem, "Joseph and Aseneth," *OTP*, 2:177–247; and Denis, *Introduction*, 1:291–329.

eminence and gave him an Egyptian wife named Aseneth, the daughter of Potiphera, the priest of On (Gen 41:45). While this open exogamy was apparently not problematic for the original storytellers, it created serious difficulties for Second Temple Jews who were heirs of centuries of endogamy.⁴⁸ The romance that we know as *Joseph and Aseneth* was composed, in part, to address this problem. The solution was obvious: Aseneth needed to convert from Egyptian polytheism to Jewish monotheism. The account of her conversion is extensive and involves a number of intriguing aspects.⁴⁹ One of these is the personification of μετόνοια.

Aseneth realized that her gods stood between her and Joseph when he refused to kiss her, but said a prayer for her conversion. When he left, "She wept with a great and bitter wail. She repented of her gods whom she worshiped" (*Jos. Asen.* 9.2). After seven days of intense mourning, she worked up the courage to address God in a lengthy prayer of confession. God sent the chief of the divine house to help her. After the heavenly visitor announced her impending marriage to Joseph, he said: "Your name will no longer be called Aseneth, but your name will be City of Refuge." The angel then explained: "In you many nations will take refuge with the Lord God Most High. Under your wings many peoples will find shelter by trusting in the Lord God. In your wall those who are devoted to God Most High in the name of repentance will be protected." The identification of Aseneth with a City of Refuge where the nations may take shelter suggests that she is a model for others.⁵⁰

⁴⁸ The date of *Joseph and Aseneth* has become a point of contention. Kraemer, *When Aseneth Met Joseph*, dates it to the third century CE. G. Bohak, *Joseph and Aseneth and the Jewish Temple in Heliopolis* (SBLJL 10; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1996), dates it to around the mid-part of the second century BCE. The evidence does not permit us to situate it with confidence. I tentatively place it in the first century CE in Egypt.

⁴⁹ There are a number of studies on conversion in this text. Some of the most important include R. C. Douglas, "Liminality and Conversion in *Joseph and Aseneth*," *JSP* 3 (1988): 1–42; E. V. Gallagher, "Conversion and Community in Late Antiquity," *JR* 73 (1993): 1–15, esp. 7–11; R. Chestnutt, *From Death to Life: Conversion in Joseph and Aseneth* (JSPSup 16; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1995); E. Humphrey, *Joseph and Aseneth* (Guides to Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 2000), 52–63, who surveys recent work on conversion; and Méndez-Moratalla, *The Paradigm of Conversion in Luke*, 46–54, who examines the social implications of the conversion, i.e., her relationship to her family and the possible surrender of possessions.

⁵⁰ It is possible that the name change reflects the practice of changing a name to mark a conversion. For this practice see G. H. R. Horsley, "Name Change as an Indication of Conversion in Antiquity," *Numen* 34 (1987): 1–17. Chestnutt, *From Darkness to Light*, 127–28, recognizes this, but correctly points out that "Aseneth's change of name has more to do with her special prototypical and matriarchal role than with her position as

The identification is repeated twice: once when Aseneth's seven virgin maids were identified as "the pillars of the City of Refuge" (17.6) and again when Joseph recognized her conversion (19.5, 8).

The angel then personified repentance as a virtue: "For Metanoia is in heaven, a beautiful and especially good daughter of the Most High."⁵¹ He explained her functions: "She entreats God Most High hourly for you and for all who repent in the name of God Most High since he is the father of Metanoia and she is the guardian of all virgins. She loves you dearly and intercedes with the Most High hourly for you." He then returned to the image of the City: "She has prepared a place of rest in heaven for all who repent. She will renew all who repent and serve them forever." He closed his remarks on Metanoia by characterizing her as a captivatingly beautiful virgin: "Metanoia is an especially beautiful virgin, pure, always laughing, holy, and gentle. The Father Most High loves her; all the angels stand in awe of her. I love her dearly because she is my sister. Because she loves you virgins, I love you too" (*Jos. Asen.* 15.7–8).

This personification of Metanoia as a woman allowed the narrator to set up a nice balance between the angel who was compared to Joseph (14.9) and Aseneth who is identified with Metanoia.⁵² The difference is that the heavenly visitor is compared to an earthly man while the earthly woman is compared to a personified heavenly virtue. The personification of a virtue or quality of God is certainly well established: wisdom is personified in a number of sapiential texts.⁵³ What is striking about this text is the prominence of Metanoia. It is the pivot point for Aseneth and all like her who would turn "from the darkness to the

an individual proselyte." The name that she receives supports this suggestion. So also C. Burchard, *Untersuchungen zu Joseph und Aseneth: Überlieferung-Ortsbestimmung* (WUNT 8; Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1965), 112–21 and Méndez-Moratalla, *The Paradigm of Conversion in Luke*, 51–52.

⁵¹ For a comparison of Metanoia in the shorter and longer recensions see Kraemer, *When Aseneth met Joseph*, 61–62, where she points out that the longer recension does more to identify Metanoia with wisdom than the shorter recension. She also suggests that Metanoia could be based on Metatron, "the lesser Yahweh" of *3 Enoch* 12.5; 48C:7; 48D:1 or Michael (see pp. 131–32). For an even more detailed comparison of Metanoia with Wisdom in the two recensions see Å. Standhartinger, *Das Frauenbild im Judentum der hellenistischen Zeit: Ein Betrag anhand von 'Joseph und Aseneth'* (AGJU 26; Leiden: Brill, 1995), 189–204.

⁵² Kramer, *When Aseneth Met Joseph*, 130–32, points out how unusual it was to identify an angelic figure as female (e.g., p. 130: "No ancient Jewish source that I know of, *hekhalot* and otherwise, envisions an explicitly female angel in the heavenly cosmology").

⁵³ E.g., Prov 8:1–36; 9:1–6; Sir 24:1–34; Wis 7:22–8:1.

light, from error to truth, and from death to life.”⁵⁴ The presentation of the conversion is so striking that some have thought that the text was Christian; however, the differences between the conversion here and conversions in Christian texts are noteworthy, for example, the absence of baptism in *Joseph and Aseneth*. The text is best understood as an account of tradition transition in Judaism.⁵⁵

PHILO OF ALEXANDRIA

As impressive as the account of Aseneth’s conversion is, it does not link conversion to monotheism together with ethics in the same way that Luke-Acts does. There is a Jewish author who does this, Philo of Alexandria.⁵⁶ The Torah exegete used three sets of terms for conversion. Most commonly, he employed μεταβάλλω (132 times) and μεταβολή (115 times). He used them for tradition transition,⁵⁷ intensification,⁵⁸ and apostasy⁵⁹ as well as in several related ways.⁶⁰ The next most common set of cognates are μετανόεω (35 times) and μετάνοια (30 times). He used them for both tradition transition and intensification.⁶¹ For Philo the latter denoted a moral reorientation of existence from the body to the mind or soul.⁶² Besides these he used the words to mean repent of a

⁵⁴ *Jos. Asen.* 8.9, the prayer of Joseph for Aseneth.

⁵⁵ For a helpful discussion of the debate see J. J. Collins, “Joseph and Aseneth: Jewish or Christian?” *JSP* 14 (2005): 97–112.

⁵⁶ On Philo’s understanding of repentance see D. Winston, “Judaism and Hellenism: Hidden Tensions in Philo’s Thought,” *SPhA* 2 (1990): 4–7; J. D. Bailey, “*Metanoia* in the Writings of Philo Judaeus,” *SBL Seminar Papers*, 1991 (SBLSP 30; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1991), 135–41; idem, “Repentance in Luke-Acts,” 95–103; Nave, *The Role and Function of Repentance in Luke-Acts*, 85–96; and Méndez-Moratalla, *The Paradigm of Conversion in Luke*, 24–35, who does not examine the presentation of μετάνοια, but looks at the social implications of conversion.

⁵⁷ The verb is used in *Abr.* 76; *Mos.* 2.44; *Spec.* 1.51; *Praem.* 152. Cf. also *Praem.* 163, 164.

⁵⁸ The verb is so used in *Leg.* 1.89; *Mut.* 76, 123–24; *Somn.* 2.105; *Abr.* 17; *Mos.* 1.56; *Spec.* 1.282, 306; 2.19; *Virt.* 177. The noun suggests this in *Her.* 309; *Abr.* 18 (*bis*), 26; *Spec.* 1.188; *Virt.* 183; *Praem.* 115, 159, 164; *QG* 2.41.

⁵⁹ The verb is used in this way in *Mut.* 171; *Mos.* 1.298; *Spec.* 3.99, 103 (the latter two refer to moral apostasy). The noun conveys desertion or apostasy in *Ios.* 254; *Mos.* 1.298.

⁶⁰ The verb is neutral in *Leg.* 3.246. The verbal adjective appears in *Gig.* 48 to represent the Stoic view that the wise person does not change.

⁶¹ All uses are in one text that we will consider below. The verb appears in *Virt.* 175, 176, 180; and the noun in *Virt.* 175, 180, 183.

⁶² The verb is so used in *Leg.* 2.60; *Cher.* 2; *Deus* 8; *Fug.* 99, 157, 160; *Mut.* 235; *Abr.* 27; *Spec.* 1.103. The noun denotes intensification in the sense of a reorientation of

deed (vs. reorientation of existence),⁶³ regret or change one's mind,⁶⁴ and as a passion (repeating a Stoic view).⁶⁵ Finally, he occasionally used ἐπιστρέφω (33 times), but not ἐπιστροφή. He only employed ἐπιστρέφω one time for tradition transition (*Spec.* 2.256) and six times for intensification in the sense of a reorientation of existence from body to soul or mind.⁶⁶ His language is thus different from the LXX, but has some similarities with *Joseph and Aseneth*.

There are two texts in the Exposition of the Law where the philosophically minded exegete treated conversion at some length. The first is his treatment of Enoch. Like the later rabbis, Philo worried about the place of the patriarchs who lived before the law. The fact that they preceded the law raised the difficult issue of how they could be devout when piety was measured by observance of the law. Philo solved the problem by grouping them into two triads and suggesting that they represented different aspects of virtue in anticipation of the law. The first triad consisted of Enos (hope), Enoch (repentance), and Noah (righteousness).⁶⁷ The second triad included Abraham (virtue by instruction), Isaac (innate virtue), and Jacob (virtue by training).⁶⁸ The identification of Enoch with repentance is worth exploring.

Philo knew several different interpretations of Enoch.⁶⁹ Besides inclusion in the triad,⁷⁰ he suggested that Enoch could mean "your gift" in the sense of a product of the human mind in some texts⁷¹ and a wise person in another.⁷² The identification of Enoch with repentance predated Philo and is at least as old as Ben Sira who called him "an

existence in *Leg.* 2.78; *Fug.* 158, 159 (*bis*); *Mut.* 124, 235; *Somn.* 2.108, 109; 2.292; *Abr.* 17, 26; *Spec.* 1.102, 187, 236; *Praem.* 15, 22.

⁶³ The verb suggests this in *Leg.* 3.211; *Ios.* 87; *Mos.* 2.167; *Spec.* 1.239, 241, 253 (*bis*); *QG* 1.13a. The noun has this connotation in *Leg.* 3.106, 213; *Sacr.* 132; *Det.* 96; *Spec.* 1.58; *QG* 2.13a.

⁶⁴ For texts with the verb see *Deus* 72 (God); *Somn.* 1.91 (*bis*), 182; *Mos.* 1.167, 283; *Spec.* 4.18, 221; *Virt.* 152, 208; *Legat.* 303, 337, 339; *QG* 4.131. For the noun see *Post.* 178; *Deus* 33 (God); *Flacc.* 181.

⁶⁵ *Aet.* 40. Cf. also *QG* 4.8.

⁶⁶ *Post.* 135; *Conf.* 131; *Her.* 46; *Fug.* 142; *Somn.* 2.174; *Ios.* 87.

⁶⁷ Philo, *Abr.* 7–47; *Praem.* 7–23.

⁶⁸ Philo, *Sobr.* 65; *Congr.* 34–38; *Mut.* 12, 88; *Somn.* 1.168; *Abr.* 52–54; *Ios.* 1; *Mos.* 1.76; *Praem.* 24–51, 57–66.

⁶⁹ For a summary of the texts see J. C. VanderKam, *Enoch: A Man for All Generations* (Studies on Personalities of the Old Testament; Columbia: University of South Carolina, 1995), 148–52.

⁷⁰ *Abr.* 17–26; *Praem.* 15–21; *QG* 1.82–86.

⁷¹ *Post.* 33–43; *Conf.* 122–23. This interpretation is based on Gen 4:17.

⁷² *Mut.* 34–38. This interpretation is based on Gen 5:24.

example of repentance” (ὕπόδειγμα μετανοίας).⁷³ Philo is thus taking up an existing exegetical tradition and developing it.⁷⁴

He did so in the treatise *On the Life of Abraham* where he treated the first triad *in extenso*. He opened and closed his treatment of Enoch with an *inclusio*. “Repentance for sins (ἡ ἐπὶ τοῖς ἀμαρτανομένοις μετάνοια) and improvement (βελτίωσις) hold the second position after hope. For this reason Moses next describes the one who changed (μεταβάλλω) from the worse life to the better, who is called among the Hebrews Enoch but Greeks would say ‘favored.’” (*Abr.* 17). He rounded off the *inclusio* as follows: “We must keep in mind that repentance (μετάνοια) takes second place to perfection, just as a change (μεταβολή) to good health from an illness takes second place to a body free from disease.” He went on to explain that “the state of unbroken perfection in the virtues stands closest to the divine power, but improvement (βελτίωσις) over a certain period of time is a distinct good of the naturally good soul” (*Abr.* 26). Philo thus held the standard philosophical tradition that repentance is possible when it brings improvement;⁷⁵ it is, however, second to perfection.⁷⁶

The basis of his exegetical treatment is the text of Gen 5:24: “Enoch pleased God and was not found because God transferred (μετέθηκεν) him.” Philo was interested in the two phrases “he was not found” and “God transferred him.” He reversed their order in the biblical text and took up the latter first. The Alexandrian understood that “Transference (ἡ μετάρθεσις) indicates turning (τροπή) and conversion (μεταβολή), a conversion to the better because it occurs by the foresight of God” (*Abr.* 18). He explained that this helps us to understand why he was not found. It is either “by virtue of the fact that the old and guilty life has been erased and is no longer found as if it had never existed or by the fact that the one who has been transferred has been placed

⁷³ Sir 44:16. This is only in the Greek. The Masada fragments and Syriac do not have it.

⁷⁴ The basis for the tradition is the statement in Gen 5:22: “Enoch pleased God after he fathered Methuselah” (LXX). MT reads: “Enoch walked with God after he fathered Methuselah.” Interpreters apparently understood that Enoch had not always pleased God. He therefore must have repented. The repetition of the phrase, “Enoch pleased God” in Gen 5:22 and 24 made it possible for interpreters to cite Gen 5:24 as a basis for the tradition.

⁷⁵ Philo makes the connection between repentance and improvement in *Somn.* 2.107; *Praem.* 163, 164, 167, 169.

⁷⁶ He insisted that it holds second place in *Fug.* 157; *Somn.* 1.91; *Virt.* 177. In *Spec.* 1.186–88, esp. 187, he argued that it was equivalent to a lack of sinning.

in a better place and is by nature difficult to find” (*Abr.* 19). This led him to a contrast between the worthless (φαῦλος) and noble character (ἀστέιος) (*Abr.* 20–21, 22–23). The contrast moved the line of thought back to the concept of change. He described it in these words: “He picks up anchor and moves from ignorance to education, from folly to prudence, from cowardice to courage, from impiety to piety, from love of pleasure to self-control, from love of glory to a lack of arrogance.” (*Abr.* 24; cf. 24–25). He thus made it clear that he has a moral reorientation of life in mind when he refers to Enoch. This, however, could be understood as intensification and not tradition transition. Does he use it for the latter?

He does so in the complex treatise that we know today as *On the Virtues*. In this treatise Philo set out a series of virtues as appendices to his exposition of the law in *On the Decalogue* and *On Special Laws*. He explained the rationale for the treatise at the conclusion of the fourth treatise of *On Special Laws*: “Enough of these matters. It is imperative to know that just as for each one of the ten there are some individual laws related to it that have nothing in common with any other (of the ten), so there are some that are common to all... These are the universally-valid virtues” (*Spec.* 4.132). Thus, just as he organized various laws under the headings of the ten laws of the Decalogue, so he grouped other laws under the headings of specific virtues. Unfortunately, the number of the virtues and their identity are far from certain. The manuscript tradition for *On the Virtues* lists the specific virtues in the title of the treatise. There are two major arrangements:⁷⁷ one group of manuscripts has ἀνδρεία (*courage*), φιλάνθρωπία (*humanity*), μετάνοια (*repentance*), εὐγένεια (*nobility*), or a slightly different arrangement of the same virtues;⁷⁸ another group has three of the four virtues, although there is no agreement on order or on the specific virtues.⁷⁹ Still other manuscripts only provide two⁸⁰ or one of the virtues.⁸¹ The treatises as we know them today are arranged in the following way:

⁷⁷ For details see J. R. Royse, “The Text of Philo’s *De virtutibus*,” *SPhA* 18 (2006): 77–81. I have followed his summary of the manuscript evidence.

⁷⁸ S F F Cantabrigiensis Coll. S. Trin. B 9,6 HL.

⁷⁹ Leeuwardensis gr. 40 A Matritensis Est. 11, gr. 2a, 40 Escorialensis Y,I,5 P Oxoniensis Coll. Novi 143 C.

⁸⁰ Vaticanus gr. 379.

⁸¹ BEMOV and K have *courage*; Parisinus gr. 1630 has *repentance*; and N has *nobility*.

Περὶ δικαιοσύνης, *Spec.* 4.136–238

Περὶ ἀνδρείας, *Virt.* 1–50

Περὶ φιλανθρωπίας, *Virt.* 51–174

Περὶ μετανοίας, *Virt.* 175–86

Περὶ εὐγενείας, *Virt.* 187–227

This arrangement rests on two major witnesses. Clement of Alexandria drew from *On the Virtues* in the second book of his *Stromateis*.⁸² He knew the same fourfold arrangement. The same arrangement is found in Codex Seldenianus XII, a tenth or eleventh century manuscript that contains part of *On Special Laws* 3, all of 4, and *On the Virtues*. It is the only manuscript to contain the entirety of *On the Virtues*. Does this reflect the arrangement of the original?⁸³

I do not think that it does. We have four fragments of a lost work which also appears in some of the titles in the manuscript tradition, Περὶ εὐσεβείας. I am convinced that this was once a section in Philo's treatment of the virtues.⁸⁴ More importantly for our purposes, we need to ask whether the relatively brief treatments of μετάνοια and εὐγένεια were separate units or subunits of the larger handling of φιλανθρωπία. The major edition of Cohn-Wendland, followed by F. H. Colson, in the Loeb Classical Library, treated them as separate virtues based on some of the manuscript evidence.⁸⁵ As we have already noted, the manuscript tradition is problematic at best. There are several internal factors that lead me to think that they were subsections of Περὶ φιλανθρωπίας (*Concerning Humanity*) rather than independent units. The first is their brevity: they are far shorter than any of the other units. The second is

⁸² Clement of Alexandria, *Strom.* 2.78–100. For details see A. van den Hoek, *Clement of Alexandria and His Use of Philo in the Stromateis: An Early Christian Reshaping of a Jewish Model* (VCSup 3; Leiden: Brill, 1988), 69–115.

⁸³ There are two important recent treatments of the text: D. T. Runia, "Underneath Cohn and Colson: The Text of Philo's *De virtutibus*," *SBL Seminar Papers*, 1991 (SBLSP 30; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1991), 116–34; repr. in idem, *Philo and the Church Fathers: A Collection of Papers by David T. Runia* (VCSup 32; Leiden: Brill, 1995), 77–101 (all references are to the latter form of the article) and Roysse, "The Text of Philo's *De virtutibus*," 73–101. My conclusions (see below) are very similar to those of Roysse.

⁸⁴ See my "The Queen of the Virtues: Piety in Philo of Alexandria," *SPhA* 18 (2006): 103–23, especially 105–12, and Roysse, "The Text of Philo's *De virtutibus*," 81–94. *Contra* Runia, "Underneath Cohn and Wendland," 96–97. E. Hilgert, "A Review of Previous Research on Philo's *De virtutibus*," *SBL Seminar Papers*, 1991 (SBLSP 30; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1991), 104–7, has a good summary of the earlier treatments. He leaves the question open.

⁸⁵ *Concerning repentance* is *Virt.* 175–86 and *Concerning nobility of birth* is *Virt.* 187–227.

the absence of extended editorial frames similar to those that introduce justice, courage, and humanity.⁸⁶ The third is that both make good sense within the context of Philo's handling of φιλανθρωπία: proselytes who repent are to be warmly embraced as members of Israel; Israel can not rely on noble birth, but must live the virtuous life. Both of these show that Israel is open to all who live a virtuous life; she can not successfully be accused of misanthropy for her insistence on virtue. These reasons lead me to reject the current presentation of repentance as one of the main virtues in the treatise.

What does Philo say about repentance? His treatment falls into three distinct units. He opened with an affirmation that repentance takes the second place, using some of the same language that he did in his treatment of Enoch: "The most holy Moses . . . exhorts everyone everywhere to be zealous pursuers of piety and justice and holds out great prizes to those who repent as if they were victors, namely membership in the best society and the enjoyment of both the small and the great blessings in it." He explained the latter by using various images including the image of the health of a body: a body free from disease is preferable to a body that recovers. The latter is correction (ἐπανόρθωσις) which takes second place. Repentance is similar. "For not to sin at all is a quality of God, and perhaps of a divine man;⁸⁷ but to convert from sin to a blameless life is a quality of the prudent person who is not unaware of what is entirely profitable."⁸⁸

The second section takes up the first form of repentance, conversion to monotheism. The implied audience is Jewish. The Alexandrian wanted his compatriots to welcome proselytes as equals. He wrote: "Therefore all, as many as have embraced the Creator and Father of all, even if they did not originally think it worthy to reverence him but later embraced the rule of One in place of the rule of many, should be received as the dearest friends and closest relatives." He then turned directly to his compatriots: "We must rejoice with them, as if, although they were formerly blind, they have moved from the deepest blindness and regained their sight and now see the most bril-

⁸⁶ Philo does provide brief editorial frames for these virtues, but they lack the notions of sequence that characterize the introductions to courage (*Virt.* 1) and humanity (*Virt.* 51).

⁸⁷ On the divine man in Judaism see C. R. Holladay, *THEIOS ANER in Hellenistic Judaism: A Critique of the Use of This Category in New Testament Christology* (SBLDS 40; Missoula, Mont.: Scholars Press, 1977).

⁸⁸ *Virt.* 175–77. For similar statements see *Fug.* 157; *Leg.* 2.60.

liant light" (*Virt.* 178–79). This is a striking statement that illustrates a universal tendency in Greek-speaking Judaism. Philo did not advocate a mission to non-Jews but argued that those who turn to monotheism should be welcomed.⁸⁹

The third section takes up the second form of repentance, ethical reorientation: "The first and most important aspect of repentance has been discussed. But someone should repent not only for the things by which he has been deceived for a long period of time, standing in awe of the created rather than the Uncreated and Maker, but also in the other concerns of life..." Specifically, "this is moving from ignorance to knowledge of the things for which ignorance is a disgrace, from foolishness to prudence, from a lack of self-control to self-control, from injustice to justice, from cowardice to boldness." The contrast in the conversion led him to a list of twelve virtues and eight vices (*Virt.* 180–82). He next introduced two texts that serve as the basis for his remaining exposition. The first is Deuteronomy 30:12–14 that affirms that the word is not distant but is near, "in your mouth and in your heart and in your hands." Philo understood these to be symbols for our words, intentions, and actions (*Virt.* 183–84). His treatment is similar to his exposition of Leviticus 5:1–3 in *On the Change of Names* where he stated that there are three forms of repentance for three types of sins: our intentions are the least offensive, our words carry greater guilt, and our actions bear the greatest culpability.⁹⁰ The orientation is thus from thought to deed. In our context, he urged his readers to bring about harmony among all three through repentance. When this occurs, the promise of the second text, Deut 26:17–18, can be realized: we choose God and God chooses us (*Virt.* 184–86).

Philo provides us with the most extensive description of conversion that we have from a Second Temple Jewish author. While some aspects of his treatment are peculiar to him, that is, the reorientation of the person from the life of the body to the life of the mind, he set out the basic contours of the concept. There are two aspects: the first is turning from polytheism to monotheism and the second is ethical reform. The

⁸⁹ Cf. also Philo, *Abr.* 76; *Spec.* 1.51–53; 2.256; *Praem.* 152. *Spec.* 1.51–53 is particularly helpful. Philo argued that those who have the desire to experience God should have the same status "whether they were such by nature from the first or became better through conversion (ἐκ τοῦ μεταβάλλεσθαι) to the better state." On Philo's universalizing tendency see E. Birnbaum, *The Place of Judaism in Philo's Thought: Israel, Jews, and Proselytes* (BJS 290/SPhM 2; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1996).

⁹⁰ Philo, *Mut.* 235–51. Cf. also *Post.* 80–84; *Somn.* 2.180; *Praem.* 79–84; *Prob.* 68.

latter is clearly influenced by the concept in Hellenistic philosophy as his inclusion of Hellenic virtues and vices makes evident. The former is an extension of this with a Jewish orientation. While the universalism that it embraces played a minor role in the eschatological vision of the prophets in the LXX, it became a more important dimension to Jewish communities in the Diaspora as both *Joseph and Aseneth* and Philo attest.

LUKE-ACTS

Do these texts help us to understand anything about Luke-Acts?⁹¹ Luke refers to conversion far more than any other NT writer. He used ἐπιστρέφω eighteen times out of the thirty-seven occurrences in the NT or 49% of the total uses. More importantly, Luke's known sources, Q and Mark, did not use ἐπιστρέφω for conversion—with the possible exception of the citation of Isa 6:10 in Mark 4:12.⁹² A few other NT authors used it to describe conversion,⁹³ but none with the frequency of Luke who used the term on a regular basis to describe the conversion of the Gentiles (tradition transition)⁹⁴ and the Jews (institutional transition initially and perhaps tradition transition at the time of the

⁹¹ The contemporary study of conversion or repentance in Luke-Acts began with the redaction critical work of H. Conzelmann, *The Theology of St. Luke* (trans. G. Buswell; New York: Harper & Row, 1960 [German original, 1954]), 99–101, 227–30. The most important studies since Conzelmann's work include: J. Dupont, "Repentir et conversion d'après les Acts des Apôtres," *ScEcll* 12 (1960): 137–73; repr. in idem, *Études sur les Acts des Apôtres* (Lectio Divina 45; Paris: Les Éditions du Cerf, 1967), 421–57; idem, "La conversion dans les Actes des Apôtres," *LumVie* 9 (1960): 48–70; repr. in *Études sur les Acts des Apôtres*, 459–76; R. Michiels, "La conception lucanienne de la conversion," *ETL* 41 (1965): 42–78; F. Hezel, "'Conversion' and 'Repentance' in Lucan Theology," *The Bible Today* 37 (1968): 2596–2602; I. H. Marshall, *Luke: Historian and Theologian* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1970), 193–96; J. J. Navone, *Themes of St. Luke* (Rome: Gregorian University Press, 1970), 38–46; J. A. Fitzmyer, *The Gospel according to Luke* (2 vols.; AB 28A–B; Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1981–85), 1:237–39; Gaventa, *From Darkness to Light*, 52–129; Bailey, "Repentance in Luke-Acts," 122–283 the first full length study; Witherup, *Conversion in the New Testament*, 44–73; P. Pokorný, *Theologie der lukanischen Schriften* (FRLANT 174; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1998), 121–27; Nave, *The Role and Function of Repentance in Luke-Acts*, 145–224; and Méndez-Moratalla, *The Paradigm of Conversion in Luke*, 71–214.

⁹² Cf. also Matt 13:15; John 12:40; Acts 28:27.

⁹³ 1 Thess 1:9; James 5:19, 20; 1 Pet 2:25. Cf. also Gal 4:9; 2 Pet 2:21 (Prov 26:11), where the verb refers to defection/apostasy.

⁹⁴ Acts 11:21; 14:15; 15:19; 26:18, 20.

author).⁹⁵ Like Philo, he also used the verb to call for repentance of a specific deed.⁹⁶ The author of Acts is the only NT author to use the cognate noun ἐπιστροφή; he employed it for the conversion of the Gentiles (Acts 15:3).

A similar pattern holds true for the cognates μετανοέω/μετάνοια. Luke used the verb fourteen times out of the thirty-three NT occurrences or 42% of the total uses and the noun eleven times out of a total of twenty-two NT appearances or 50% of the total uses. He expanded the usage of Q by adding four references⁹⁷ to the three that already existed.⁹⁸ His handling of Mark is slightly different: he dropped the two occurrences of the verb in Mark⁹⁹ but maintained the sole appearance of the noun.¹⁰⁰ More importantly, he consistently used both verb and noun to describe the conversion of the Gentiles (tradition transition)¹⁰¹ and the Jews (institutional transition initially and perhaps tradition transition at the time of the author),¹⁰² as well as to denote repentance for a specific act.¹⁰³ This quick survey points to the importance of the concept for the historian.

Luke 3:1–20. There are a number of texts in the double work where the concept becomes paramount. The first is the evangelist's summary of the preaching of John the Baptist.¹⁰⁴ The differences between the

⁹⁵ Luke 1:16, 17; Acts 3:19; 9:35; 28:27 (Isa 6:10).

⁹⁶ Luke 17:4; 22:32.

⁹⁷ He added the verb three times (Matt 11:20//Luke 10:13; Matt 18:14//Luke 15:7; Matt 18:15–17//Luke 17:3–4) and the noun once (Matt 18:14//Luke 15:7).

⁹⁸ The verb occurs twice (Matt 11:21//Luke 10:13; Matt 12:41//Luke 11:32) and the noun once (Matt 3:8//Luke 3:8).

⁹⁹ Mark 1:15//Luke 4:15; Mark 6:12//Luke 9:6. The two texts are summaries of the message of Jesus and the twelve whom Jesus sent out to preach. Luke's first shift makes Jesus less of an eschatological prophet than John. See Conzelmann, *The Theology of St. Luke*, 114; Michiels, "La conception lucanienne de la conversion," 73–75; Nave, *The Role and Function of Repentance in Luke-Acts*, 159–64. The second shift brings the disciples into line with Jesus. For details see Nave, *The Role and Function of Repentance in Luke-Acts*, 191–94. The two omissions share a common feature: they eliminate the content of what was preached and simply note that Jesus and the twelve taught/evangelized. The result is that the content is supplied by the sayings of Jesus. It may also be that Luke does not want the disciples to proclaim repentance until they can do so in Jesus' name.

¹⁰⁰ Mark 1:4//Luke 3:3.

¹⁰¹ He used the verb in Acts 17:30 and 26:20. The noun occurs in Luke 24:47; Acts 11:18; 20:21; 26:20.

¹⁰² The verb appears in Luke 13:3, 5; 15:7, 10; Acts 2:38; 3:19. The noun is used in Luke 3:3, 8; 5:32; 15:7; Acts 5:31; 13:24; 19:4.

¹⁰³ These are all verbal uses: Luke 10:13; 11:32 (?); 16:30; 17:3, 4; Acts 8:22.

¹⁰⁴ Luke 3:1–20. For extended analyses of the function of repentance in this text see

apocalyptic prophet of Mark and the moral reformer of Luke and Josephus are well known.¹⁰⁵ The third evangelist made several changes to Mark that altered the portrait. Luke was fond of gathering related material together into a thematic unit. He did so in the case of the preaching of the Baptist, a literary move that solved a significant problem for him. He collected material about John in Luke 3:1–20, including the account of his arrest, and then omitted John in the following account of Jesus' baptism (Luke 3:21–22). In this way he avoided the embarrassing reality that the lesser had baptized the greater. Among the units of material that the evangelist collected in his treatment of John are two that directly relate to repentance: a Q text (3:7–9) and a special Lukan text (3:10–14). The evangelist added these to the Markan characterization of John as “preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins.”¹⁰⁶ The additional material provides content for this characterization.

The first of the two is the fiery Q text that summarized John's challenge to his contemporaries.¹⁰⁷ Luke later echoed the language of the demanding prophet. The statement, “produce fruits worthy of repentance” (ποιήσατε οὖν καρποὺς ἀξίους τῆς μετανοίας),¹⁰⁸ is echoed in Paul's summary of his preaching in his speech before Agrippa II, “producing deeds worthy of repentance” (ἄξια τῆς μετανοίας ἔργα πράσσοντας). In both cases the emphasis is on moral reformation. The placement of the first reference at the beginning of the gospel and the second reference towards the end of Acts, suggests that the moral element is paramount in the two scrolls. It is also worth pointing out that if we read Luke 3:7–9 against the background of Philo's *On the Virtues*, the following warning not to depend on ancestry sounds a great deal like Philo's argument that virtue, not noble birth, is the criterion for acceptance with God (*Virt.* 187–227).

Bailey, “Repentance in Luke-Acts,” 148–84; Nave, *The Role and Function of Repentance in Luke-Acts*, 147–59; and Méndez-Moratalla, *The Paradigm of Conversion in Luke*, 71–88.

¹⁰⁵ For Josephus' comments see *Ant.* 18.116–19. Michiels, “La conception lucanienne de la conversion,” 64–65, has an apt summary of the early debate that Conzelmann set off by arguing that Luke had offered μετάνοια in the place of apocalyptic thought as part of his move towards salvation history.

¹⁰⁶ Mark 1:4//Luke 3:3.

¹⁰⁷ Matt 3:7–10//Luke 3:7–9.

¹⁰⁸ It is worth noting that the parallel in Matt 3:8 is singular: “fruit worthy of repentance.” Luke has probably altered the language of Q in order to set up the following material (3:10–14).

The fruits are specified in the L text that presents three groups who approached John: the crowds, the tax collectors, and the soldiers.

¹⁰The crowds asked him, saying: "What should we do?" ¹¹He answered and said to them: "Let the one who has two tunics give to the one who has none and let the one who has food do the same."

¹²The tax collectors also came to be baptized and said to him: "Teacher, what should we do?" ¹³He said to them: "Collect nothing more than what has been authorized for you."¹⁰⁹

¹⁴The soldiers asked him, saying: "What should we do?" He said to them: "Do not shake people down or harass them; be content with your wages."

In all three cases, the group asked the same question, τί ποιήσωμεν.... The Pentecost crowd in Jerusalem posed the same query to Peter at the conclusion of his sermon, τί ποιήσωμεν.... Just as John gave specific answers to each of the groups, so Peter provided a response including a call to repent (μετανοήσατε).¹¹⁰ The evangelist chose to echo the summary of John's preaching in later texts in order to indicate that the moral reformation that John required is part of the apostolic kerygma. For this reason it is no accident that the sermons in Acts often end with a call for repentance (see below).

Luke 15:1–30. The second text is the collection of three parables that deal with the lost in Luke 15.¹¹¹ The evangelist gave them a setting similar to the setting of the first banquet scene.¹¹² In both cases, Jesus' table fellowship with tax collectors and others led the Pharisees and scribes to challenge Jesus.¹¹³ In both cases, Jesus issued a call for repentance.¹¹⁴ In the latter case, the evangelist brought together and edited three parables in order to make his point: a Q parable (the lost sheep) and two L parables (the lost coin and the lost son). The evangelist

¹⁰⁹ Cf. Zachaeus in Luke 19:1–10, esp. v. 8. Although this text does not use the language of "repentance," the narrative implies it.

¹¹⁰ See also Luke 10:25; 18:18, that each pose a very similar question: τί ποιήσας ζῶναι αἰώνιον κληρονομήσω.... Cf. also Acts 16:30; 22:10.

¹¹¹ For detailed analyses see Bailey, "Repentance in Luke-Acts," 185–228; Nave, *The Role and Function of Repentance in Luke-Acts*, 179–85; Méndez-Moratalla, *The Paradigm of Conversion in Luke*, 131–52.

¹¹² Luke 5:27–39. Nave, *The Role and Function of Repentance in Luke-Acts*, 179–80, has a fuller discussion.

¹¹³ Compare Luke 5:29–30 with 15:1–2.

¹¹⁴ Compare Luke 5:32 with the endings of the first two parables, 15:7, 10, and the actions of the younger son, 15:17–20.

edited them so that they all share a common pattern represented by four common verbs or sets of verbs. Each of the parables uses ἀπόλλυμι,¹¹⁵ εὕρισκω,¹¹⁶ μετανοέω/μετάνοια,¹¹⁷ and χαίρω/συγχαίρω/χαρά/εὐφραίνομαι.¹¹⁸ The use of the language for repentance is worth noting. The evangelist added the language in the two concluding editorial frames to the first two parables. It did not appear in the form of the parables that the evangelist inherited. In fact, it would make little sense since it is impossible for a sheep or coin to repent. The language of the editorial frame corresponds to the language of “found” in the parable proper. The third parable lacks the concluding, first person singular, editorial frame and so omits repentance language altogether. Unlike the first two parables, however, it contains an example of repentance. It is thus similar to the story of Zacchaeus in 19:1–10 that contains an example of repentance without using the language of repentance. It is not an accident that the Zachaeus story concludes with a direct echo of the language of this chapter.¹¹⁹ Repentance is the critical point when a person makes the transition from lost to found.

There is one other dimension that should not be overlooked. The final parable turns on the elder brother who must decide either to remain outside or join the party that has welcomed the sinner back home.¹²⁰ This brings the three parables back to the editorial setting in which the Pharisees and scribes complained about Jesus’ fellowship with tax collectors and sinners. Christian communities must also welcome repentant sinners. Just as Philo urged his compatriots to accept those who repented, so does Luke.¹²¹

Luke 24:44–49. The third text is the Lukan version of the great commission. In what is correctly considered to be one of the pivotal

¹¹⁵ Luke 15:4 (*bis*), 6; 15:8, 9; 15:24, 32.

¹¹⁶ Luke 15:4, 5, 6; 15:8, 9 (*bis*); 15:24, 32, the final frames for the two sections of the parable.

¹¹⁷ Luke 15:7 (*bis*); 15:10. Cf. also 15:17–20, 21.

¹¹⁸ Luke 15:5, 6, 7; 15:9, 10; 15:23, 24, 29, 32 (*bis*).

¹¹⁹ Luke 19:10: “For the Son of Man came to seek and to save what is lost (τὸ ἀπολωλός).”

¹²⁰ The parable has an opening frame (15:11) that sets up the two parts (15:12–24 and 15:25–32). The first half deals with the younger brother. The second half with the older brother. The point of the parable is signaled by the place where it remains open: the decision of the older brother. The reader is forced to ask: what did he do? The question is directed at the reader.

¹²¹ See above, esp. Philo, *Virt.* 179: “We must rejoice with them, as if, although they were formerly blind, they have moved from the deepest blindness and regained their sight and now see the most brilliant light.”

statements of the double work, Jesus explained the scriptures to the disciples. He suggested that they contain three concepts: the death of the Messiah, his resurrection, and “that repentance for the remission of sins should be preached in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem” (Luke 24:44–49). The first two of these summarize Luke; the third sets up Acts. It suggests that the apostolic preaching will consist of a demand for repentance. If we turn to Acts we find a consistent presentation. There are eight missionary sermons in Acts: six to the Jews¹²² and two to the Gentiles.¹²³ Three of the sermons to the Jews contain explicit calls for repentance¹²⁴ and both to the Gentiles require it.¹²⁵ We also have several summaries of Pauline preaching in Acts: both present repentance as the message that Paul proclaimed.¹²⁶ The conversion stories themselves do not mention repentance, but use faith and baptism. There are, however, two summaries that refer to conversion.¹²⁷ The presentation is thus consistent with the summary of John’s preaching. The Christian kerygma is a summons to repent.

The Sermons of Acts. If we turn to the call for repentance in the sermons in Acts, we find little that is new or distinctive.¹²⁸ For example, Paul’s sermon to the people of Lystra calls upon them to convert. He said: “We are humans with the same nature as you. We announce good news to you to turn (ἐπιστρέφειν) from these vain things to the living God...” (Acts 14:15). There is nothing distinctly Christian about this. The author of *Joseph and Aseneth* or Philo could have said the same thing. A similar articulation does appear in Paul’s description of the conversion of the Thessalonians in 1 Thessalonians 1:9: “how you turned (ἐπεστρέψατε) to God from idols to serve a living and true God.” The language and concept were common property to Greek-speaking Jews and early Christians.

The same may be said for the summaries of Paul’s preaching. We return to the text with which we began, Paul’s address to Agrippa II. He

¹²² Acts 2:14–36, 38–39; 3:12–26; 4:8–12, 19–20; 5:29–32; 10:34–43; 13:16–41.

¹²³ Acts 14:14–17; 17:22–31.

¹²⁴ Acts 2:38; 3:19; 5:30.

¹²⁵ Acts 14:15; 17:30.

¹²⁶ Acts 20:21; 26:18, 20.

¹²⁷ Acts 9:35; 11:21.

¹²⁸ There are several helpful extended analyses of the role of repentance in the discourses of Acts: Michiels, “La conception lucanienne de la conversion,” 44–54; Bailey, “Repentance in Luke-Acts,” 229–67; Nave, *The Role and Function of Repentance in Luke-Acts*, 200–20.

said: “So, King Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision, but I announced first to those in Damascus and Jerusalem, then to all the area of Judea, and to the Gentiles that they should repent and turn to God (μετανοεῖν καὶ ἐπιστρέφειν ἐπὶ τὸν θεόν) and practice deeds worthy of repentance.”¹²⁹ The text brings us full circle by recalling the table of contents laid out geographically in Acts 1:8. The charge that Jesus gave his disciples has thus been accomplished in the work of Paul. It consisted of a call to monotheism and morality.

CONCLUSION

The narrative of Luke-Acts relates the expansion of Christianity from Jewish Jerusalem to Gentile Rome, from the center of an ethnic group whose traditions formed the basis for the movement to the capital of an empire whose populace offered a future. The transition was by no means easy. It was, however, a *fait accompli* by the time that the author wrote the story. His task was to explain how it had happened in an effort to provide Christians with an identity as they became a distinct movement.¹³⁰ The explanation is complex: it involves a number of concepts. One of these is conversion. The call to repent or to convert lay at the heart of the Way’s expansion: from the preaching of John the Baptist to the preaching of Paul. Initially, the call took the form of intensification or institutional transition. However, as Gentiles entered the movement, the movement began to become distinct from Judaism and the call was for tradition transition whether the call was issued to Gentiles or Jews.

The text presents conversion as a turn to ethical monotheism. While there are prophetic hints of such a view, the LXX never used the language of μετανοέω / μετάνοια for tradition transition. The closest analogy that we have is the understanding of conversion in Second Temple Jewish authors, especially in the writings of Philo of Alexandria who provides an exposition that permits us to fill out the brief statements in Luke and Acts. The view was apparently common in Jewish houses of prayer and synagogues, at least in those who opened Judaism up to

¹²⁹ Acts 26:19–20. Cf. also v. 18.

¹³⁰ See my *Historiography & Self-definition: Josephos, Luke-Acts, and Apologetic Historiography* (NovTSup 64; Leiden: Brill, 1992; repr., Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2006).

the larger world. The author of Luke-Acts was undoubtedly familiar with this understanding and expected the readers to be as well.

There is, however, something quite different about the presentation in Luke-Acts. We may put it in the form of a question: Why did the universal impulse in Judaism become the property of Christianity? I do not want to imply that Judaism lost such an impulse; it did not. I do want to affirm that Christianity co-opted the Jewish understanding of conversion, at least as it is presented in Luke-Acts. What Second Temple Jews employed passively, early Christians pursued actively and aggressively.¹³¹ There were probably multiple factors that led to this shift from passive acceptance to aggressive pursuit: the outreach of Jesus to the marginal of his society, the disagreements over *halakah* and the law that arose between Jews and early Christians, and the resulting social tensions between followers of Jesus and their Jewish colleagues who did not accept him. Eventually Christians took the radical step of breaking away from an exclusive ethnic base. The author of Acts realized that conversion to ethical monotheism was the mechanism that would explain the incorporation of outsiders.

In this way the vision of Jewish thinkers like Philo of Alexandria, became a reality. It is hardly a surprise that later Christians gave Philo a posthumous baptism,¹³² although I doubt that he would have appreciated the christening. While Christians should respect the loyalty of a figure like Philo to Judaism, we should also remember that the universal impulse and the mechanism to exercise it came from Jewish sources.

¹³¹ On the limits of Jewish missionary activity before 100 CE, see S. McKnight, *A Light among the Gentiles: Jewish Missionary Activity in the Second Temple Period* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1991) and M. Goodman, *Mission and Conversion: Proselytizing in the Religious History of the Roman Empire* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994), esp. 60–90. For a defense of Jewish missionary activity in this period see L. H. Feldman, *Jew & Gentile in the Ancient World: Attitudes and Interactions from Alexander to Justinian* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993), 288–382.

¹³² On the Philo Christianus legend see J. E. Bruns, “Philo Christianus: The Debris of a Legend,” *HTR* 66 (1973): 141–45, and D. T. Runia, *Philo in Early Christian Literature: A Survey* (CRINT 3.3; Assen: Van Gorcum; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1993), esp. 1–7.

THE MESSIANIC USE OF ZECHARIAH 9–14 IN MATTHEW, MARK, AND THE PRE-MARKAN TRADITION

Mark Black

Since C. H. Dodd's 1953 *According to the Scriptures*, the frequent use of Zech 9–14 in the gospels has been well documented.¹ Scholars have suggested that Jesus may be identified in the gospels with the following characters and roles from these six chapters:²

1. The king who enters Jerusalem on a donkey (Zech 9:9 in Matt 21; Mark 11)
2. The one whose blood re-establishes the covenant (Zech 9:11 in Matt 26:28; Mark 14:24)
3. The shepherd valued at thirty silver pieces (Zech 11:13 in Matt 27:9–10)
4. The one who is pierced and mourned (Zech 12:10 in Matt 24:30; Mark 14:62; John 19:37)
5. The rejected shepherd whose sheep scatter (Zech 13:7–9 in Matt 26:31; Mark 14:27)

¹ C. H. Dodd, *According to the Scriptures: The Substructure of New Testament Theology* (New York: Scribner's, 1953), 64–67. Dodd proposes that the common use of OT passages by the NT writers represents "a genuinely chronological starting point for the history of Christian thought," or at least "as early a period in the history of the early Church as our research can reasonably expect to reach" (11). With regard to Zech 9–14 he writes that, "although explicit quotations are not very thick on the ground, yet, apart from express quotations, there are no very long tracts without *some* phrases which are alluded to, or echoed, in various parts of the New Testament ..." (57).

² The most significant studies on the use of Zech 9–14 in the gospels are Barnabas Lindars, *New Testament Apologetic: The Doctrinal Significance of the Old Testament Quotations* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1961), 110–34; F. F. Bruce, "The Book of Zechariah and the Passion Narrative," *BjRL* 43 (1960–61): 336–53; R. T. France, *Jesus and the Old Testament: His Application of Old Testament Passages to Himself and His Mission* (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity, 1971), 103–10; Douglas J. Moo, *The Old Testament in the Gospel Passion Narratives* (Sheffield: Almond, 1983), 173–224; Christopher Tuckett, ed., *The Book of Zechariah and Its Influence* (Burlington, Vt.: Ashgate, 2003); and Clay Alan Ham, *The Coming King and the Rejected Shepherd: Matthew's Reading of Zechariah's Messianic Hope* (NTMS 4; Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix, 2005). Among those who have examined the textual data of the allusions and quotations are Krister Stendahl, *The School of St. Matthew and Its Use of the Old Testament* (Uppsala: Almqvist & Wiksells, 1954); Robert H. Gundry, *The Use of the Old Testament in St. Matthew's Gospel, with Special Reference to the Messianic Hope* (Leiden: Brill, 1967); Wilhelm Rothfuchs, *Die Erfüllungszitate des Matthäus-Evangeliums: Eine Biblisch-theologische Untersuchung* (BWANT 5.8; Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1969).

6. The one who ushers in the resurrection age (Zech 14:5 in Matt 25:31; 27:51–53)
7. The one who brings about the purified temple (Zech 14:21 in Matt 21:12–13; Mark 11:15–17)

In the present study I will offer for each relevant text (1) the evidence for finding the influence of Zechariah in the passage; (2) the evidence that Matthew, Mark, and the pre-Markan tradition recognized that influence;³ and (3) the general contours of the interpretation of the Zechariah passage in Matthew, Mark, and their traditions.⁴

I will maintain that the influence of Zech 9–14 on the gospel accounts is both deeper and broader than is often acknowledged. On the one hand, Matthew emphasizes and expands upon the use of Zechariah in his Markan source. On the other, Mark does little to draw attention to the echoes of Zech 9–14 in his tradition, all of which were already present. These chapters had a formative influence on the development of the gospel narratives. Furthermore, the early church read Zech 9–14 as a whole, finding in these oracles an implied narrative sequence.

TRIUMPHAL ENTRY (ZECH 9:9 IN MATT 21:1–11/MARK 11:1–11)

Matthew's account generally follows Mark, omitting and adding several details. He adds the formula quotation, the related second donkey, the crowds' praise for "the Son of David," and the actual entry into Jerusalem with the crowd's excited response, "This is the prophet Jesus from Nazareth in Galilee." Most of his redactional changes stem from the concern with fulfillment of scripture.⁵ He also uses the story to allow Jesus subtly to announce his messiahship and to clarify the nature of that role. Matthew seems to emphasize the meekness of this

³ The uses of Zech 9–14 in John will be examined briefly when they provide insight into the traditions drawn upon by Matthew and Mark.

⁴ I am grateful to Carl Holladay for directing my dissertation, of which this paper is an updated summary with an expanded argument ("The Rejected and Slain Messiah Who Is Coming with His Angels: The Messianic Exegesis of Zechariah 9–14 in the Passion Narrative" (Ph.D. diss., Emory University, 1990).

⁵ George M. Soares Prabhu, *The Formula Quotations in the Infancy Narrative of Matthew* (Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1976), 157.

messiah (πράύς),⁶ identifying Jesus with the humble eschatological king prophesied in Zech 9:9.⁷

Mark (11:1–11), on the other hand, does not explicitly mention the Zecharian oracle. However, he is aware of its influence on the story, since the scriptural passage and the Gospel narrative have the same three elements: the entry into Jerusalem, the riding on the donkey, and the rejoicing of the people.⁸ He also mentions that the colt had never been ridden (11:2), a possible reflection upon the LXX description of the animal as νεός. The Markan story, which is generally assumed to have come to Mark from his tradition, is intended to proclaim the arrival of the Messiah, a message understood in light of Zech 9:9. Jesus borrows and rides the donkey in order to make a thinly-veiled statement about his identity. Mark's readers, who know Jesus' real identity, can hardly fail to recognize the messianic significance of the event.⁹

Most importantly, the triumphal entry tradition has been influenced on the most fundamental level by the OT text. If Jesus orchestrated such an event, as many think, it was on the basis of Zech 9:9.¹⁰ If the

⁶ Matthew has already used the term πράύς in 5:5; 11:29–30; and 12:18–21. Günther Bornkamm (in Günther Bornkamm, Gerhard Barth, and Heinz Joachim Held, *Tradition and Interpretation in the Gospel of Matthew* [Philadelphia: Westminster, 1963], 125–31) believes this usage is meant to refer back to the humble, even “afflicted” figures in the Isaianic servant texts.

⁷ W. D. Davies and Dale C. Allison, *The Gospel according to St. Matthew* (3 vols.; Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1997), 3:112.

⁸ Heinz-Wolfgang Kuhn, “Das Reittier Jesu in der Einzugs-geschichte des Markus-evangeliums,” *ZNW* 50 (1959): 90; and Hermann Patsch, “Der Einzug Jesu in Jerusalem: Ein historischer Versuch,” *ZTK* 68 (1971): 10. Otto Michel, “ὄνος,” *TDNT* 5:286, writes that Mark's account is “full of mysterious links (11.2: εὐρήσατε) and not wholly unequivocal allusions (e.g., πῶλος, 11.2, 4, 5, 7; ὁ κύριος, 11.13; ὁ ἐρχόμενος, 11.9).”

⁹ Cf. Morna D. Hooker, *The Gospel according to St. Mark* (BNTC 2; London: A. & C. Black, 1991), 257. However, Aloysius Ambrozic, *The Hidden Kingdom: A Redactional-Critical Study of the References to the Kingdom in Mark's Gospel* (CBQMS 2; Washington, D.C.: Catholic Biblical Association of America, 1972), 37, finds no trace of the Zecharian vocabulary in the Markan story. But even he notes, “it is difficult to accept the view which refuses to attribute any influence whatever to the OT oracle. . . . The reason for the lack of direct influence of Zech 9:9 on the wording of the Markan story may well lie in this tradition: it was the tradition as such which influenced the story; the working of OT texts was only indirect.”

¹⁰ Scholars are divided on the issue of the historicity of the various elements in the story. Davies and Allison, *The Gospel according to St. Matthew*, 3:113, argue that a historical event probably underlies Mark 11:1–10; cf. Craig A. Evans, “Jesus and Zechariah's Messianic Hope,” in *Authenticating the Activities of Jesus* (ed. Bruce Chilton and Craig A. Evans; Leiden: Brill, 1999), 373–88. Among those who believe that the story was created on the basis of the OT text is David Catchpole “The ‘Triumphal’ Entry,”

story is not historical (in part or in full), it was created or embellished on the basis of Zech 9:9. The story owes its existence to this messianic prophecy.

DESERTION OF DISCIPLES (ZECH 13:7–9 IN MATT 26:31–35/
MARK 14:27–31)

Matthew follows closely Mark's account of Jesus' prediction of the disciples' desertion, including his quotation of Zech 13:7. Matthew is certainly aware that the quotation is from Zechariah 13, since he cites or alludes to these chapters often. In fact, he may have conformed the Markan citation to the LXX A reading by his addition of the words "of the flock."¹¹ Matthew has done little to change the Markan perspective or interpretation.¹²

Mark 14:27–31 functions to show that Jesus anticipated the failure of his disciples, especially Peter (recounted in 14:50, 66–72). However, it also shows Jesus looking beyond their failure to their reaffirmation in Galilee after his resurrection (cf. 16:7). On the historical level, some have accepted the prediction but not the denial itself,¹³ while most discount the prediction but accept as historical the denial.¹⁴ Still others accept both¹⁵ or neither.¹⁶

in *Jesus and the Politics of His Day* (ed. Ernst Bammel and C. F. D. Moule; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1984), 325. Although I have not made the assumption in this study, I too am convinced of the essential historicity of the triumphal entry and the cleansing of the temple.

¹¹ Davies and Allison, *The Gospel according to St. Matthew*, 485.

¹² Perhaps the greatest difference between the two is that Matthew has understood Mark's v. 28 to refer to an actual resurrection appearance in Galilee since that is what is offered in Matt 28:16–20. See Donald Senior, *The Passion Narrative according to Matthew: A Redactional Study* (BETL 34; Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1975), 343–97; and esp. Günter Klein, "Die Verleugnung des Petrus," *ZTK* 58 (1961): 285–328, for further discussion.

¹³ Maurice Goguel, "Did Peter Deny His Lord? A Conjecture," *HTR* 25 (1932): 1–27.

¹⁴ Walter Ernst Bundy, *Jesus and the First Three Gospels: An Introduction to the Synoptic Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1955), 504; Eta Linnemann, *Studien zur Passionsgeschichte* (FRLANT 102; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1970), 20–21; and Ernest Best, *The Temptation and the Passion: The Markan Soteriology* (SNTSMS 2; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1965), 158.

¹⁵ Vincent Taylor, *The Gospel according to St. Mark* (London: Macmillan, 1952), 548.

¹⁶ Klein, "Die Verleugnung des Petrus," 285–328. Cf. J. Finegan, *Die Überlieferung der Leidens- und Auferstehungsgeschichte Jesu* (BZNW 15; Giessen: Töpelmann, 1934), 69, 73.

How integral is Zech 13:7 to this story? Taylor argues that this pericope came to Mark from the tradition substantially as it now stands.¹⁷ It is commonly acknowledged that Mark has placed this story in its present position in the narrative.¹⁸ Some argue, however, that the Zechariah quotation (14:27b) has surprisingly little to do with the desertion-prediction of Jesus and in fact disturbs the natural flow from v. 27a to v. 29. Therefore, it is suggested, the account was originally independent of the quotation.¹⁹ Suhl, for example, notes that Peter's comment refers back to verse 27a ("even though *all become deserters*"—he was claiming to be the exception to Jesus' prediction) and ignores the OT quotation.²⁰ However, it is more easily argued that the Zechariah quotation is the reason for the inclusion of the whole pericope.

There are several reasons for regarding the quotation as already linked to the prediction/flight story in Mark's tradition. First, it is embedded also in John's account, which is independent of Mark.²¹ Second, the theme of scriptural fulfillment is the reason that Jesus makes such a

¹⁷ Taylor, *Mark*, 653–58. Taylor allows that v. 28 may be an addition, but that the story as it stands is a unity.

¹⁸ William L. Lane, *The Gospel according to Mark* (NICNT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974), 510, for example, notes, "The fact that the flow of the narrative would be uninterrupted if a reader jumped from verse 26 to verse 32 suggests that Mark is responsible for the insertion of verses 27–31 at this point." Best, *The Temptation and the Passion*, 157, suggests that Mark himself inserted vv. 27b–28.

¹⁹ Max Wilcox, "The Denial Sequence in Mark 14:26–31, 66–72," *NTS* 17 (1971): 430; Klein, "Die Verleugnung", 297, says it is "in sachlicher Spannung." Lindars, *New Testament Apologetic* 129, assumes that Mark inserted these statements because of the "needs of the narrative plot."

²⁰ Alfred Suhl, *Die Funktion der alttestamentlichen Zitate und Anspielungen in Markusevangelium* (Gütersloh: Gerd Mohn, 1965), 62.

²¹ In John 16:30 after the disciples' claim to faith ("We believe that you came from God"), Jesus questions their belief (or at least its depth) and predicts that "the hour is coming, indeed it has come, when (ἵνα) you will be scattered (σκορπισθῆτε), every man to his home, and will leave me alone" (16:32). It is tempting to see in ἵνα an implication that what happened was done "in order to fulfill the prophecy of Zechariah about the sheep being scattered" (Raymond E. Brown, *The Gospel according to John* [AB 29, 29A; Garden City, N.J.: Doubleday, 1966, 1970], 2:727; cf. Rudolf Schnackenburg, *The Gospel according to St. John* [3 vols.; New York: Crossroad, 1980, 1982], 3:165). John's use of the verb σκορπίζειν is probably an allusion to Zech 13:7, in view of the image of "scattering" in the context of their desertion of Jesus after the arrest. The term is similar to Mark's διασκορπίζειν (also found in LXX A, whereas LXX B has ἐκστάν). However, we should not assume his familiarity with Mark; more likely his was a tradition similar to the tradition drawn upon by Mark (Brown, *John*, 2:787–90); cf. C. H. Dodd, *Historical Tradition in the Fourth Gospel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1963), 58. The passage presents a greater problem in John, since it does not appear to be fulfilled—the disciples do not desert Jesus.

prediction concerning his disciples, a prediction that would accomplish far less without the quotation. The use of the quotation is probably as old as the tradition of the prediction, since the point is that Jesus knows what is going to happen *because it is foretold in scripture* (cf. 8:31; 14:21a, 49b). Third, there is no other instance of Mark's insertion of a reference to Zech 9–14.

We cannot know with any confidence how the pre-Markan tradition of prediction, desertion, and denial developed.²² But if the prediction was the earliest element, it most likely was based on Zech 13:7, so that Zechariah is the source of this episode and its fulfillment in 14:50.²³ If, on the other hand, the desertion/denial tradition was prior, then only this pericope (the prediction) is dependent on Zech 13:7. If both are historical traditions, Zech 13:7 is again at the heart of the events. In any case, the story would not likely have been passed on (or created) if not for its scriptural background in Zech 13:7.

The account would also be missing other integral elements without the reference to Zech 13. Most importantly, it gives the reason for the disciples' abandonment of Jesus—the striking of the shepherd. Jesus has told the disciples that the Scriptures must be fulfilled which prophesy his death. Here he predicts it again, this time making explicit the Scripture.

A third element of the story that is integral to the quotation is that found in v. 28, the promise of a post-resurrection reunion in Galilee. Several have argued that the account reads well, perhaps even better, without it.²⁴ Dibelius suggests that it originally belonged in an account which, like Matthew, included a Galilean resurrection appearance.²⁵ As

²² See the discussion in Raymond E. Brown, *The Death of the Messiah: A Commentary on the Passion Narratives in the Four Gospels* (ABRL; 2 vols.; New York: Doubleday, 1994), 1:218–23.

²³ Wilcox, “The Denial Sequence in Mark 14:26–31, 66–72,” 436, says, “In spite of all appearances to the contrary, the story is not primarily about Peter (however indispensable he is to it) but rather about the time of testing and trial foreshadowed in Zech 13:7–14:4 and proclaimed in the ‘sayings of Jesus.’”

²⁴ Joel Marcus, *The Way of the Lord: Christological Exegesis of the Old Testament in the Gospel of Mark* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1992), 154; Julius Wellhausen, *Das Evangelium Marci* (Berlin: Georg Reimer, 1903), 119; cf. Taylor, *Mark*, 549; and Rudolf Pesch, *Das Markusevangelium* (HTKNT 2.1: Freiburg: Herder, 1977), 52–58. It is curiously absent from the Fayyum fragment. R. T. France, *The Gospel of Mark: A Commentary on the Greek Text* (NIGTC; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002), 573, describes the fragment as “a fairly free and radically abbreviated citation of the narrative rather than a copy....”

²⁵ Martin Dibelius, *From Tradition to Gospel* (trans. B. L. Woolf; New York: Scribner's, 1935), 184. Others have offered differing explanations. Cf. Wilcox, “The Denial Sequence in Mark 14:26–31, 66–72,” 428.

it stands, it looks ahead to 16:7 (and perhaps to the now-lost ending),²⁶ where the angel instructs the women to tell the disciples and Peter that Jesus is going before (προάγει) them to Galilee where they will see him, “as he told you.” Many therefore contend that the logion (Mark 14:28) is “to some extent independent of its context.”²⁷ However, on closer examination, v. 28 reflects the larger context of the scriptural quotation, the reuniting of the flock after being refined by fire, as suggested in Zech 13:8–9. It continues the shepherd theme with the use of προάγω.²⁸ When this is understood, the verse suits very well its context. “Jesus’ death [is] the event which leads to the scattering of the disciples” and “his Resurrection [is] the event which enables the scattered flock to be reconstituted.”²⁹ Mark 14:27–31 is no more disjointed than Zech 13:7–9.

Mark 14:27–31 identifies Jesus as the smitten shepherd of Zech 13:7, stricken by God for the purpose of scattering *and then cleansing* the flock. The fact that John also echoes Zech 13:7 implies that this tradition probably predates Mark.³⁰ Christians from the earliest times associated Jesus with the deserted shepherd whose death led to the cleansing and restoration of the flock.

THE FATE OF JUDAS (ZECH 11:12–13 IN MATT 26:15; 27:3–10)

Only Matthew makes reference to Zech 11 in his treatment of Judas. Mark and John make no further reference to Judas after the betrayal. Luke finishes the story of Judas in Acts 1, but with reference to Pss 69 and 109 rather than to Zechariah. Lindars refers to Matt 27:3–10 as “the most elaborate product of the Church’s *midrash pesher* in the New Testament.”³¹ Montefiore writes that it is “one of the clearest examples

²⁶ See R. H. Gundry, *Mark: A Commentary on His Apology for the Cross* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993), 1009. Cf. Rudolf Bultmann, *The History of the Synoptic Tradition* (trans. John Marsh; Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1968), 267.

²⁷ Wilcox, “The Denial Sequence in Mark 14:26–31, 66–72,” 428. Bultmann, *The History of the Synoptic Tradition*, 267, writes that it “points beyond the Denial to an even wider context.”

²⁸ Joachim Jeremias, “ποιמן,” *TDNT* 6:493.

²⁹ Moo, *The Old Testament in the Gospel Passion Narratives*, 217.

³⁰ Rudolf Schnackenburg, *The Gospel According to St. Mark* (trans. W. Kruppa; 2 vols.; New York: Crossroad, 1981), 2:123. See also Wilcox, “The Denial Sequence in Mark 14:26–31, 66–72,” 430–31, and Joachim Jeremias, *New Testament Theology* (London: SCM Press, 1971), 297.

³¹ Lindars, *New Testament Apologetic*, 116.

of history made up from bits of Old Testament prophecy.”³² There can be no doubt regarding the formative influence of Zechariah on this account.³³

Senior argues that Matthew’s story grew out of Mark’s account, based on what was perceived to be a lacuna in the story.³⁴ The episode looks back to Mark 14:10–11, 21, in which the reader is told of (1) the complicity between the Jewish leaders and Judas, (2) the idea of “blood money,” and (3) the presentiment of Judas’ death. Since these elements are “the basic content (but not the descriptive presentation) of Mt 27:3–10,”³⁵ and since the tragic end of Judas is not fulfilled in Mark, it appears that Matthew has composed this account.³⁶

The pericope functions in several ways for Matthew. Matthew’s fulfillment theme is supported—even the betrayal in all its details was foreknown by God and is therefore his will. Perhaps even more important is the fact that Jesus is identified with the rejected shepherd.³⁷

There is no reason to believe that Zech 11 was linked to the betrayal and fate of Judas before Matthew. Where, then, did Matthew get the inspiration for such a reading? There are several possibilities. Perhaps there was a simple verbal link between his tradition and the Zechariah quotation, such as the reference to the potter or the thirty pieces of silver. More likely, though, a much larger correspondence was recognized. The context in Zechariah involves God’s representative (though somehow “worthless”) being sent to shepherd Israel (as king? cf. v. 6), rejected by the leaders, paid off with an insulting sum of money, and finally stricken and even killed in accord with the command of God (13:7). (The identification of the “worthless shepherd” of Zech 11:4–17 with the stricken shepherd of 13:7–9 is not surprising, especially in

³² C. G. Montefiore, *The Synoptic Gospels* (2 vols.; 2nd ed.; London: Macmillan, 1927), 2:329.

³³ Brown, *Death of the Messiah*, 1:657.

³⁴ Senior, *The Passion Narrative according to Matthew*, 375, notes that this is the largest Matthean insertion into Mark’s passion narrative.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 376.

³⁶ Senior, *The Passion Narrative according to Matthew*, 349, notes that the similar prediction of Jesus concerning the denial of Peter is fulfilled in great detail in Mark, thereby almost emphasizing the lack of fulfillment in the case of Judas.

³⁷ For the importance of the shepherd motif in Matt 27:3–10, see Francis Martin, “The Image of Shepherd in the Gospel of St. Matthew,” *ScEs* 27 (1975): 261–301; and Ernst Lohmeyer, *Das Evangelium des Matthäus* (rev. Werner Schmauch; 4th ed.; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1967), 380. Lindars, *New Testament Apologetic*, 134, writes that, “Zech 11:13 was used to account for the treatment of Jesus before being narrowed down to the story of Judas.”

light of 11:17: “May the sword strike [the shepherd’s] arm and his right eye.”)³⁸ If these connections are made, the result, according to 13:8–9, is the purification of a remnant of the flock. Furthermore, just as Peter’s (and the others’) denial in Mark was prophesied by Zech 13:7, here Matthew has found in a related passage the betrayal of Judas. Matthew may have been led to the larger context of Zech 9–14 by the obvious use of Zech 9 and 13 earlier in his Markan source. Since Matthew has already followed his source in identifying Jesus with the shepherd of 13:7, it is not at all difficult to believe that Matthew made such an interpretive move.

While this usage of Zech 11 cannot claim to be early or widespread, it is likely based on earlier messianic understandings of other portions of Zech 9–14. Matthew used it because of the correspondences suggested above, given in an eschatological context, in an enigmatic text concerning God’s appointed shepherd. In summary, the quotation has had a great impact on the narrative (just as the narrative has had on the quotation). The story would have little point apart from its background in Zech 11.

THE PIERCED ONE (MATT 24:30; MARK 14:62; JOHN 19:37)

Zechariah 12:10–14 envisions a mysterious “pierced one” over whom there is great mourning. Most importantly, the words, “when they look on the one whom they have pierced, they shall mourn him. . . . The land shall mourn. . . and all the families that are left. . . .” are echoed in the gospels. The Gospel of John relates that Jesus’ side was “pierced” with a spear (19:37). The other gospels, however, see Zech 12:10 fulfilled in the crucifixion itself.

Matt 24:30 predicts that “all the tribes of the earth will mourn (κόψονται πᾶσαι αἱ φυλαὶ τῆς γῆς), and they will see (ὄψονται) the Son of Man.” This is a clear allusion to Zech 12:10–14 LXX (which uses the terms κόψονται, πᾶσαι αἱ φυλαὶ, and γῆ).³⁹ Less obvious allusions to Zech 12:10 are found in texts such as Matt 26:64/Mark 14:62 and Matt 16:28 (cf. Mark 9:1), in which the phrase “you/they will see”

³⁸ Brown, *Death of the Messiah*, 1:658, writes that “seemingly it was the same shepherd” in 11:4–17 and 13:7. This is not to suggest that Zech 13:7–9 ever followed 11:4–17 in the textual history or that the identification is an easy one.

³⁹ Ham, *The Coming King and the Rejected Shepherd*, 94.

from Zech 12:10 is combined with the Son of Man imagery. Norman Perrin argues that Zech 12:10 was a well-known *testimonium* in the early church which circulated in a fixed textual form.⁴⁰ The clearest example reflecting this tradition is found in the combination of Parousia imagery from Dan 7:13 with language from Zech 12:10 in Rev 1:7: "Look! He is coming with the clouds; every eye will see (ὄψεται) him, even those who pierced him, and on his account all the families of the earth will mourn." Since John 19:37, Rev 1:7, and Matt 24:30 all agree in the reading (ὄψονται/εται against Zech 12:10 LXX ἐπιβλέψονται), Perrin suggests that ἐπιβλέψονται was altered to ὄψονται on the basis of a word-play with the earlier-used (in Zech 12:10) κόψονται.⁴¹ Therefore, whenever ὄψονται (or a related form) is used in connection with a reference to Jesus' Parousia, it should be seen as an allusion to Zech 12:10. Matthew 24:30 (above) seems to confirm this analysis, since Matthew expands on Mark 13:26 (ὄψονται τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου) by making explicit the allusion to Zech 12:10 (the mourning of all the tribes of the earth).⁴²

The tradition linking Zech 12:10 to the crucifixion of Jesus is clearly found in Matthew, John, and Revelation. If Perrin's analysis is correct, it is also found in Mark's tradition and is surely very early. Jesus is identified in the gospels as the pierced one of Zech 12:10.⁴³

TEMPLE CLEANSING (ZECH 14:21 IN MATT 21:12–13/MARK 11:15–17)

Many have linked the so-called temple cleansing to Zech 14:21: "There shall no longer be traders in the house of the Lord of hosts on that

⁴⁰ N. Perrin, "Mark xiv. 62: The End Product of a Christian Peshet Tradition?" *NTS* 12 (1965–66): 153–55. See also D. E. Aune, *Revelation 1–5* (WBC 52A; Dallas: Word, 1997), 55.

⁴¹ Perrin, "Mark xiv. 62," 153.

⁴² Perrin, "Mark xiv. 62," 154, suggests that John further theologizes on the basis of this tradition in John 1:51: "you will see (ὄψεσθε) heaven opened and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man."

⁴³ Although the examination of early Jewish interpretations is outside the bounds of this study, the most interesting are those that identify the pierced one of Zech 12:10 with the Messiah bar Ephraim. It is possible that such messianic readings prepared for the early church's use of this text. See the most recent discussion and bibliography in David C. Mitchell, "Messiah bar Ephraim in the Targums," *Aramaic Studies* 4.2 (2006): 221–41. Mitchell believes that this interpretive tradition predates the Christian period. See also France, *Jesus and the Old Testament*, 190–98; and Black, "The Rejected and Slain Messiah Who Is Coming with His Angels," 133–41.

day.” Although there is no obvious verbal allusion to Zechariah, the suggestion is plausible. John’s account (2:16) appears to provide an echo: “You shall not make my father’s house a house of *trade*.”⁴⁴ It is not clear that Matthew or Mark intend an allusion or even recognize a connection to Zech 14. Both, however, link this account specifically to the triumphal entry, which is tied to Zech (9:9).⁴⁵

Since it is found in Mark and John, the story is surely pre-Markan.⁴⁶ The central question, of course, concerns the role played by Zech 14 in its formation.⁴⁷ Few interpreters would deny that Zechariah had at least a minor role in the development or retelling of the tradition.⁴⁸ Many, perhaps most, would agree with Davies and Allison: “It is plausible enough that Jesus, perhaps with Zech 14:21 in mind, indicated by both prophetic word and symbolic deed, God’s eschatological judgement upon the temple...”⁴⁹

⁴⁴ Henk Jan de Jonge, “The Cleansing of the Temple in Mark 11:15 and Zechariah 14:21,” in Tuckett, *The Book of Zechariah and Its Influence*, 90–91, provides a helpful discussion of the term כְּנָעַנִי, arguing that it was understood in the sense of “trader” in the first century CE. C. K. Barrett, *The Gospel according to St. John*, (2nd ed.; Philadelphia: Westminster, 1978), 20, surmises that the term כְּנָעַנִי suggested the Greek ληστής, which then led to Jer 7:11 (“den of robbers”).

⁴⁵ De Jonge, “The Cleansing of the Temple in Mark 11:15 and Zechariah 14:21,” 91, thinks that Matthew and Luke retained the earlier tradition in which Jesus enters Jerusalem and cleanses the temple on the same day. Cf. W. R. Telford, *The Barren Temple and the Withered Tree* (JSNTSup 1; Sheffield: JSOT, 1980), 45–49.

⁴⁶ De Jonge remarks that the temple cleansing (as well as the triumphal entry) actually presents a picture of Jesus that Mark is otherwise careful to avoid—that Jesus is an insurgent or revolutionary (92). He offers this as evidence that Mark got the story from his tradition.

⁴⁷ Most of the literature on the cleansing of the temple mentions the possible influence of Zech 14:21. See esp. Bruce Chilton, *The Temple of Jesus: His Sacrificial Program Within a Cultural History of Sacrifice* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1992), 135–36; J. D. M. Derrett, “The Zeal of Thy House and the Cleansing of the Temple,” *DR* 95 (1977): 79–94; C. K. Barrett, “The House of Prayer and the Den of Thieves,” in *Jesus und Paulus* (ed. E. E. Ellis and Erich Grasser; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1975), 13–20; N. Q. Hamilton, “Temple Cleansing and Temple Bank,” *JBL* 83 (1964): 365–72; R. H. Hiers, “The Purification of the Temple: Preparation for the Kingdom of God,” *JBL* 90 (1971): 82–90; Cecil Roth, “The Cleansing of the Temple and Zechariah xiv.21,” *NovT* 4 (1960): 174–81; and E. Trocme, “L’Expulsion des marchands du Temple,” *NTS* 15 (1968–1969): 1–22.

⁴⁸ Most believe that Jesus did carry out some sort of activity, but there is no agreement regarding its extent. Cf. V. Eppstein, “The Historicity of the Gospel Account of the Cleansing of the Temple,” *ZNW* 55 (1964): 42–58, and the references in the following notes. See Davies and Allison, *The Gospel according to St. Matthew*, 134–37, for a survey of opinions regarding the historicity and possible motivation for Jesus’ symbolic action.

⁴⁹ Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 136. Cf. de Jonge, “The Cleansing of the Temple in Mark 11:15 and Zechariah 14:21,” 94–95.

Catchpole argues for the formative role of Zech 14:21 when he contends that the temple cleansing incident is not primarily about exploitation—Jesus expels not only the (supposed) exploiting sellers but also the exploited buyers—but rather purification of the temple of trade as such. Zechariah 14:21, it is argued, provides the most appropriate scriptural text out of which to understand the incident. The fulfilment of the ancient text has in a temporary and preliminary way been achieved.⁵⁰ Jesus has inaugurated the age envisioned in Zech 14.⁵¹

It is thus possible that the gospel tradition of the temple cleansing owes its existence to Zech 9–14. Whether or not Jesus actually engaged in the activity, the account may have originated with an interest in Zechariah in mind. Since the final chapters of the gospels often echo Zechariah, this is a strong possibility.

BLOOD OF THE COVENANT (ZECH 9:11 IN MATT 26:28/MARK 14:24)

A number of scholars entertain the possibility that the covenant words at the Last Supper (Matt 26:28/Mark 14:24: “This is my blood of the covenant”) may allude to Zech 9:11 (“because of the blood of my covenant with you”).⁵² Although the Passover setting of the Last Supper would seem to make Exod 24:8 (“This is the blood of the covenant”) the most likely referent, there are several indicators favoring Zech 9:11.⁵³ First, only the Zechariah text makes reference to *my* (כִּרְיָתִךָ) covenant, perhaps corresponding to “my blood of the covenant” in the gospels. Second, the context in the gospels and in Zech 9:11 is “redemptive in motive in an eschatological passage.”⁵⁴ Third, the covenant language

⁵⁰ Catchpole, “The ‘Triumphal’ Entry,” 330–34. Others who locate the source of the episode in Zech 14:21 are Jeremias, *New Testament Theology*, 107, 145; and Barrett, “The House of Prayer,” 19–20. Others who assign an influential role are Hamilton, “Temple Cleansing,” 365–72; Lane, *Mark*, 406; Lindars, *The Gospel of John* (NCB; London: Marshall, Morgan & Scott, 1972), 139; and Craig A. Evans, “Jesus’ Action in the Temple: Cleansing or Portent of Destruction?” *CBQ* 51 (1989): 252.

⁵¹ Richard H. Hiers, “The Purification of the Temple: Preparation for the Temple of God,” *JBL* 90 (1971): 87.

⁵² See Marcus, *The Way of the Lord*, 157; Lindars, *New Testament Apologetic*, 132–34; Leopold Goppelt, *Typos: The Typological Interpretation of the Old Testament in the New* (trans. Donald H. Madvig; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1982), 113–14; and Craig F. Evans, “I Will Go before You into Galilee” *JTS* ns 5 (1954): 6.

⁵³ Cf. de Jonge, “The Cleansing of the Temple in Mark 11:15 and Zechariah 14:21,” 88.

⁵⁴ Lindars, *New Testament Apologetic*, 132–33.

in Zech 9:11 is expressly linked (by the use of the first person pronoun) to the coming of the king in 9:9–10. Since both gospels have allusions to that oracle a few chapters before and will quote Zech 13:7 in the very next pericope (Mark 14:27/Matt 26:31), the phrase may well recall Zech 9:11.

It is impossible to know whether or not Mark and/or Matthew recognized the echo of Zech 9:11 in the Last Supper scene. Matthew follows Mark, and Mark probably follows tradition (since Mark nowhere else adds an allusion to Zech 9–14 to his tradition). This usage suggests a possible early Christian reading in which the humble king who commands peace to the nations (Zech 9:10) establishes a covenant through his blood.

MOUNT OF OLIVES AND RESURRECTION (ZECH 14:3–5 IN MATT 25:31;
27:51–53; MARK 13:3)

The frequent mention of the Mount of Olives in the final chapters of the gospels has led many scholars to Zech 14:3–5.⁵⁵ It is from the Mount of Olives that Jesus enters Jerusalem on the donkey (Matt 21:1; Mark 11:1), and it is there that the eschatological discourse is spoken (Mark 13:3 offers a verbal echo: τὸ ὄρος τῶν ἐλαιῶν κατέναντι τοῦ ἱεροῦ in Mark; τὸ ὄρος τῶν ἐλαιῶν τὸ κατέναντι Ἱερουσαλὴμ in Zech 14:4 LXX). It is there that Jesus goes in the evenings (Luke 21:37; 22:39), that he is arrested (Matt 26:30; Mark 14:26), and that he ascends (Acts 1:12).⁵⁶ Since only Zech 14:3–5 speaks of the Mount of Olives in an eschatological context, it may be that these verses have influenced the setting of these stories.⁵⁷ Matthew has apparently taken over the references above from Mark. Once again, there is little reason to think that Mark recognizes the background in Zech 14. If they are echoes, they are imbedded in his tradition.

⁵⁵ See Hooker, *The Gospel according to St. Mark*, 258, and de Jonge, “The Cleansing of the Temple in Mark 11:15 and Zechariah 14:21,” 88.

⁵⁶ Pesch, *Das Markusevangelium* 2:204, suggests that it was in sight when Jesus spoke about faith which could move “this mountain” (Matt 21:21). Cf. Wilcox, “The Denial Sequence in Mark 14:26–31, 66–72,” 430–31; Moo, *The Old Testament in the Gospel Passion Narratives*, 215.

⁵⁷ Jewish tradition had apparently already interpreted these references in a messianic context. See Josephus’s description of a would-be messiah (*Ant.* 20.170; cf. *JW* 2.261–263).

Along the same lines, Dale Allison suggests that much of Matt 27:51b–53 (the earthquake and resurrection of the saints at the time of Jesus' death) is read out of Zech 14:3–5 and traditions associated with those verses.⁵⁸ The mention in Matthew of the earthquake (ἡ γῆ ἐσειέσθη) and the splitting of the rocks (αἱ πέτραι ἐσχίσθησαν) recalls the earthquake of Zech 14:5 (LXX: σεισμοῦ) and the splitting (σχισθήσεται) of the Mount of Olives in 14:4–5. The reference to the raising of οἱ ἅγιοι (Matt 27:52) may also be due to influence from Zech 14:5 (πάντες οἱ ἅγιοι μετ' αὐτοῦ), since Matthew's usual term for the dead saints appears to be δίκαιοι.⁵⁹ While Senior argues that the Matthean passage is redactional,⁶⁰ Davies and Allison caution that the motifs are largely traditional.⁶¹ The story is probably much earlier than Matthew. In any case, the verbal links suggest that he must have known its background in Zech 14. Most importantly, Zech 14 is read in light of the death and resurrection of Jesus.

There are further echoes of πάντες οἱ ἅγιοι μετ' αὐτοῦ (Zech 14:5) in Matthew. The reference in 25:31 to the Son of Man coming in his glory καὶ πάντες οἱ ἄγγελοι μετ' αὐτοῦ is a probable allusion,⁶² even though the holy ones in this case are angels, not resurrected saints, and the future is in view rather than the past (as in 27:51–53).⁶³ The reference to the angels in Matt 24:31/Mark 13:27 ("he will send out his angels") is also a likely echo. Most interesting is Matt 16:27–28/Mark

⁵⁸ Dale Allison, *The End of the Ages Has Come: An Early Interpretation of the Passion and Resurrection of Jesus* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1985), 40–46.

⁵⁹ The splitting of the Mount of Olives and the earthquake in Zech 14:4–5 were associated with resurrection in early Jewish tradition, just as also the earthquake in Matt 27 allows the dead saints to arise. Codex Bezae Cantabrigiae of Tg. Zech. 14:4 reads, "At that time the Lord will take in his hand the great trumpet and will blow ten blasts upon it to revive the dead." See discussion in Allison, *The End of the Ages Has Come*, 43–44; Black, "The Rejected and Slain Messiah Who Is Coming with His Angels," 142.

⁶⁰ Senior, *The Passion Narrative according to Matthew*, 207–23; idem., "The Death of Jesus and the Resurrection of the Holy Ones," *CBQ* 38 (1976): 312–29; idem., "The Death of God's Son and the Beginning of the New Age," in *The Language of the Cross* (ed. A. Lacomara; Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1977), 31–59.

⁶¹ Reasons include the use of ἅγιος as a substantive; the tension with the allusion to Zech 14:5 in Matt 25:31; and the continuity of this account with early Christian theology linking the resurrection of Jesus with the general resurrection (Davies and Allison, *The Gospel according to St. Matthew*, 629).

⁶² Davies and Allison, *The Gospel according to St. Matthew*, 420. Similarly, in 1 Thess 3:13 Paul looks forward to the "Parousia of our Lord Jesus μετὰ πάντων τῶν ἁγίων αὐτοῦ." There the intended referent seems to be the resurrected saints. Paul was most likely drawing on the earlier Christian reading of Zech 14 evidenced in the gospel accounts.

⁶³ Allison, *End of the Ages*, 45.

8:38–9:1, in which the Son of Man is said to come in the Father’s glory “with the angels,” followed immediately by a reference to Zech 12:10 (when “*they see* the Son of Man coming in his kingdom”). Whether or not Matthew or Mark was aware of the echoes, they testify to a pre-Markan tradition identifying Jesus with both the pierced one of Zech 12:10 and the Lord who comes in judgment in Zech 14.

CONCLUSIONS

The influence of Zech 9–14 on the gospel traditions is significant and focused. As seen above, there are numerous echoes, allusions, and citations of portions of these chapters. It is in fact the cumulative evidence that is convincing. The usage includes five of the six chapters (all except Zech 10), and there are no significant references to Zech 1–8. Additionally, the influence is concentrated in the final chapters of the gospels.⁶⁴ Furthermore, these chapters are understood with reference to Jesus, particularly his rejection, suffering, death, resurrection, and future coming in judgment. Zechariah 9–14 was a text-plot read by early Christians in light of the experiences of the last days of Jesus.

Matthew quotes and alludes to Zech 9–14 most frequently, adding to his Markan source details concerning Judas and the betrayal (Zech 11); the rising of the saints from their graves after Jesus’ death (Zech 14:3–5); the precise literal fulfillment of details in the triumphal entry story (for example, the inclusion of two donkeys); and more specific allusions to Zech 12:10 (the mourning of the tribes in 24:30) and 14:5 (Jesus returning “with all his holy ones” in 25:31). It would appear that Matthew was aware of the Zecharian background in these cases and in the accounts in which he follows Mark.

Mark, on the other hand, does little to exploit the references to Zech 9–14 that he received. It appears that all of these references were in his tradition, specifically Zech 9:9 (triumphal entry), 12:10–14 (looking on the pierced one), 13:7–9 (prediction of the desertion and restoration of the disciples), 14:3–5 (Mount of Olives and Son of Man coming with the holy ones), and quite possibly 9:11 (blood of the covenant) and 14:21 (temple cleansing). He probably recognized the use of Zechariah in the triumphal entry account and the prediction of the

⁶⁴ See the conclusions of Ham, *The Coming King and the Rejected Shepherd*, 124.

disciples' desertion, but he offers few verbal allusions even in these two cases. It is also significant that John makes frequent reference to many of the same passages in his Gospel (temple cleansing, triumphal entry, prediction of desertion, and references to the piercing of Jesus). The use of Zech 9–14 is therefore found in the earliest traditions to which we have reasonable access.

However, Zech 9–14 is not simply echoed in early Christian traditions; it is deeply imbedded in them, often betraying a formative influence. The number of episodes in the gospels that are integrally related to Zech 9–14 is surprising. The following gospel accounts probably look to Zech 9–14 for their inspiration (or at least the reason for their becoming a part of the ongoing tradition):

1. Triumphal entry: Zech 9:9 (Mark 11; Matt 21; John 12)
2. Prediction of denial/desertion: Zech 13:7–9 (Mark 14; Matt 26; John 16)
3. Fate of Judas: Zech 11:12, 13 (Matt 26:15; 27:3–10)
4. Piercing of Jesus' side: Zech 12:10 (John 19:37)
5. Earthquake and resurrection of holy ones: Zech 14:3–5 (Matt 27:51–53)
6. Cleansing of the temple: Zech 14:21 (Mark 11; Matt 21; Luke 19; John 2)

How is the early Christian usage of Zech 9–14 best explained? Jesus himself may have provided the impetus by entering Jerusalem on a donkey, cleansing the temple, or making reference to other Zecharian passages.⁶⁵ But in any case the church in its earliest period, having witnessed the rejection and death of its messiah, went to the scriptures to understand those events. They discovered in Zech 9–14 prophecies concerning the suffering and death of Messiah Jesus.

Several factors made the early Christian reading(s) permissible. First, the very obscurity of the oracles allowed various interpretations, including messianic understandings. The obvious example is the king who rides the donkey into Jerusalem. However, the shepherd figures associated with Yahweh ("my" shepherd 13:7; the one commissioned by Yahweh in 11:4–17) and the pierced one who is somehow associated with the family of David (12:10, 12) also invited a messianic reading. This susceptibility to messianic readings is confirmed by early Jewish understandings of these passages. Though few can be confidently dated

⁶⁵ Evans, "Jesus and Zechariah's Messianic Hope," 373–88. See also France, *Jesus and the Old Testament*, 223–26; and Bruce, "The Book of Zechariah and the Passion Narrative," 343.

to the pre-Christian era, there are messianic readings for the coming king of 9:9 and the pierced one of 12:10. There are also early Jewish interpretations of Zech 14 which discovered there the resurrection in the messianic age, as implied in Matthew and Mark.

What the early Christians discovered after being led to Zech 9–14 was a whole eschatological schema in which they discovered the coming of the Messiah; his subsequent rejection, suffering, and death; the repentance, cleansing, and restoration which would follow his death; the resurrection of the saints which would follow in the messianic kingdom, and even his coming in judgment. The order of events of Zech 9–14 is difficult to analyze, since the six chapters are actually a collection of eschatological oracles joined together by common themes. However, even though there is clearly no single sequence in Zech 9–14, the reader is nonetheless encouraged to envision an eschatological drama by which Yahweh will restore his people and bring the nations to himself. It is likely no accident that the order of events in the passion narratives tends to follow the general flow of Zech 9–14, from the entry of the king into Jerusalem in 9:9; to the rejection and death of the shepherd and the repentance and cleansing of the people in chapters 11–13; to the coming eschatological judgment in chapter 14.

The following table illustrates the similarity.⁶⁶

<u>Event</u>	<u>Zechariah</u>	<u>Gospels</u>
1. Messiah enters Jerusalem	9:9–10	Matt 21:1–11; Mark 11:1–11; John 12
2. Covenant established	9:11	Matt 26:28; Mark 14:24
3. Messiah rejected	11:4–17; 13:7	Matt 21–27; Mark 12–15; John 12–19
4. Desertion of messiah	13:7	Matt 26:31, 56; Mark 14:27, 50; John 16:32
5. Death of messiah	12:10; 13:7	Matt 27:45–54; Mark 15:33–39; John 19
6. Mourning of people	12:11–14	Matt 27:54; Mark 15:39–45; Luke 23:27

⁶⁶ This sequence assumes that the early church understood Zech 13:7 to carry on the thought of 11:4–17. It must be noted that it is the order of the events narrated by the gospels, not necessarily their mention, that corresponds to Zech 9–14. The placement of the cleansing of the temple episode is admittedly the most difficult. Perhaps the incident does not recall Zech 14, or maybe it was influential apart from the suggested sequence. On the other hand, it may have been understood as an inaugural but temporary purification in anticipation of the permanent state of holiness associated with the coming judgment envisioned in Zech 14.

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|---------------------------|-----------|---|
| 7. Cleansing of people | 13:1, 8–9 | Matt 26:28; Mark 14:24;
John 7:38 |
| 8. Resurrection of saints | 14:3–5 | Matt 27:51–53 |
| 9. Age of purified temple | 14:21 | Matt 21:12–13; Mark
11:15–17; John 2:13–17 |

Donald Juell stated well the great issue facing the earliest Christians:

What stands at the heart of the kerygma—and thus at the beginning of Christian tradition—is the surprise that God’s Messiah should appear as one who died on a cross. The resurrection did not efface the problem but placed it squarely in the path of those who sought to follow the crucified and risen Christ. God had vindicated the one who died as the King of the Jews. Their task was to understand how such things could be and what the implications were, and it led them into the Scriptures with a specific agenda.⁶⁷

When they searched their scriptures, the early Christians found in Zech 9–14 an eschatological scenario which they read in order to understand and to recount the story of the suffering, death, and future coming of Jesus the Messiah.

⁶⁷ D. Juell, *Messianic Exegesis* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1988), 29.

PERFORMANCE ANXIETY:
THE USE OF ΥΠΟΚΡΙΤΗΣ IN MATTHEW 6:1–18

Michael Joseph Brown

I. THE ΥΠΟΚΡΙΤΗΣ AS A FIGURE IN MATTHEW'S NARRATIVE

The Gospel of Matthew has long been recognized as one with a central concern for community. In fact, the Sermon on the Mount (SM) places relationship (and by implication community) above even the worship of God. It says, "So when you are offering your gift at the altar, if you remember that your brother or sister has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar and go; first be reconciled to your brother or sister, and then come and offer your gift" (Matt 5:23–24 NRSV). This strong concern for interpersonal relationships on the author's part influences even his construction of the nature of the cultic relationship. In the evangelist's understanding of the intent of certain cultic performances, one individual stands out for consideration—the ὑποκριτής.

The invocation of such a technical term on the author's part demands the reader's careful consideration. Often we encounter the word ὑποκριτής in this text and assume we know what it means. Yet, such an understanding can lead to inaccurate conclusions. This problem is encountered most prominently in Matthew's tirade against the scribes and Pharisees in 23:1–39. Without a grounded appreciation of Matthew's use of the technical term, we will never come close to understanding the message he intends to convey by invoking it.¹

¹ I should point out that my understanding of the nature of language, as well as of texts, is influenced heavily by the work of process thinkers. In this regard, I believe that texts offer proposals (i.e., clusters of propositions) to their readers. These are lures to feeling. Such feelings are not the same on each occasion, especially since language cannot "express exhaustively or precisely that which [it] seeks to convey." Moreover, I also maintain that "even if the same proposition is felt by the author and a reader, or by two different readers, or by one reader at two different times, the proposition will not be felt the same way." In this way, novel readings of texts are inevitable, and the meaning of any text is really open-ended. Although historically accurate readings are possible, the relationship or conformation between what the author intended and what the reader understands should be understood as asymptotic rather than direct (Ronald L. Farmer, *Beyond the Impasse: The Promise of a Process Hermeneutic* [StABH 13; Macon: Mercer University Press, 1997], 104, 105).

Even a cursory examination of the term ὑποκριτής and its cognates reveals that it is infrequently used in Greek literature. By itself, ὑποκριτής only appears approximately 250 times, with the most frequent occurrence being in the *Scholia in Aristophanem* (thirty-six times).² In early Christian literature outside of the New Testament, the term can be found most in the work of John Chrysostom (nine times). Other Christian writers invoke it as well, but sparingly. In the New Testament, we find the term and its cognates used several times. The most interesting of these occurrences may be in the writings of Paul as well as those attributed to him (Rom 12:9; 2 Cor 6:6; 1 Tim 1:5; 2 Tim 1:5). More relevant, however, are the instances of its use in the Gospels. Mark uses the term only once (7:6). Luke uses it three times (6:42; 12:56; 13:15). By contrast, Matthew uses ὑποκριτής in either its singular or plural form a relatively astounding thirteen times (6:2, 5, 16; 7:5; 15:7; 22:18; 23:13, 15, 23, 25, 27, 29; 24:51). In comparison to its use in other forms of early Christian literature, the invocation of ὑποκριτής in Matthew's narrative stands out as a distinctive, most likely strategic, use of the term. This distinctive usage is highlighted further when one examines the narrative contexts within which Matthew uses it.

What binds the various narrative contexts in which Matthew uses ὑποκριτής together is the thread of performatives. By this I mean an utterance that is (or minimally points to) the performance of a certain kind of action that can be rendered felicitous or infelicitous rather than true or false.³ Thus, the problem the author seeks to address is not one between, say, "true" prayer and "false" prayer; rather, it is between expressions of δικαιοσύνη that more or less adequately achieve the aim embedded in the critique.⁴ Further, I am uncomfortable with rendering these performances as disingenuous in any oversimplified fashion. It appears safe, however, to assume many in Matthew's day would have connected acting to disingenuousness. Juvenal, for example, equates

² Thesaurus Lingua Graece, <http://stephanus.tlg.uci.edu.proxy.library.emory.edu/inst/textsearch> (object name *hypokrit**; accessed on 10 January 2007).

³ See the work of J. L. Austin, *How To Do Things with Words* (2nd ed.; ed. J. O. Urmson and Marina Sbisa; Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1975).

⁴ Although I do not disagree sharply with those who argue that any simplistic rendering of ὑποκριτής as "actor" or "performer" does not do proper justice to its semantic range of meaning in the first century CE, I would caution that we would be foolish to sever the central importance of performance to the term. For a criticism of the idea that hypocrite and performer should remain joined, see John Nolland, *The Gospel of Matthew* (NIGTC; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005), 274–75.

Greeks and their social practices to the despised profession of acting. “Greece is a nation of actors. Laugh, and they laugh with you,” he says. “Cry, and they cry too, although they feel no grief. If you ask for a little heat during the winter, a Greek will put on his ἐνδρορίς. If you say, ‘I am hot,’ he sweats. But we are never equal. He has the advantage of being always, night and day, able to assume a mask, a personality, which matches another expression” (*Sat.* 3.100–106 [Shelton]).⁵ Such a description is not unusual to anyone acquainted with playing the “minor role” in a drama she did not create. What Juvenal characterizes as assuming a “mask,” others would understand as a strategy for survival.⁶

At best, one can say that the characterization of the ὑποκριτής as a disingenuous person is an oversimplification of a complex web of social relationships that may require that an individual assume a socially determined role in relation to another that may or may not be an accurate expression of his interior experience. Although it is too presumptive to think this nuanced understanding of the actor influences Matthew’s employment of the term, we should remain aware of the complexity inherent in labeling an individual a ὑποκριτής or a particular performance as hypocritical. The Gospel of Matthew uses the term in a strategic rhetorical fashion, I believe, linking performance to intended audience and outcome in a way that does not connote disingenuousness as much as it does a misappropriation of the Torah. I shall focus on one of those passages that speak of such performance in a cultic context.

My central argument is simple. Matthew’s community appropriates an understanding of Judaism, and most particularly its practices, as interpreted through the lens of Jesus of Nazareth. This appropriation is considered foundational for community building and maintenance. Then the narrative sets up targeted Jewish religious practitioners as ὑπόκριται (“hypocrites”), who undermine “true” κοινωνία—the social partnership that arises by necessity among human beings (see Aristotle, *Pol.* 1252a1–8)—rather than cultivating it, as a conceptual device to differentiate between adequate and potentially inadequate practices

⁵ Quoted in Jo-Ann Shelton, *As the Romans Did: A Sourcebook in Roman Social History* (2nd ed.; New York: Oxford, 1998), 196.

⁶ See, for example, Paul Laurence Dunbar’s poem “We Wear the Mask,” in *The Collected Poetry of Paul Laurence Dunbar* (ed. J. M. Braxton; Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia), 71.

of δικαιοσύνη.⁷ Such labeling provokes a dissonance, a disharmony between what the act is supposed to accomplish and what it actually does accomplish, at least according to its presentation in the narrative's rhetoric and this interpreter's attempt to grasp with adequate clarity the criticism being applied.⁸ For example, how could an act of generosity, such as almsgiving, even when accompanied by an element of "theater," be considered as anything but community-minded? Since the act is entirely voluntary, how could the format by which it is carried out be open to such harsh critique (e.g., Matt 6:2)? In order to better understand this rhetoric of righteousness, I have decided to formulate the problem by recasting it in a language that, although contemporary, may more adequately reflect the criticism the author conveys of a model of community interaction that falls short of the distinctively egalitarian community he seeks to promote.

These ὑπόκριται promote alienation rather than salvation. By this I mean that they engage in practices that are contrary to the development of a distinctive κοινωνία. Such alienated practices, in fact, accomplish something other than what they intend.⁹ They subvert "divine" community building by promoting a negative understanding of community itself. The hypocritical almsgiver, for example, acts in a manner that is not in accordance with the divine aim.¹⁰ Thus, realizing the kingdom of the heavens means maintaining these particular practices and their

⁷ By true I mean the distinctive understanding of community advocated by the author of the gospel as opposed to the actual community in which the author and the first readers resided. Most often in this essay I will refer to this as Matthew's distinctive community.

⁸ By adequate I mean that an assertion is appropriate and credible. For a further discussion of these terms, see Schubert Ogden, *On Theology* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1986), 4–6.

⁹ Certainly, in most instances the association of performances with intention is difficult to maintain. However, if a certain set of performances are understood as formative, then the connection between the performance of a certain act and its intention becomes clearer. Cultic acts like those described in this pericope are formative practices. They have embedded in them a peculiar understanding of the world in terms of how the individual interacts with and influences the larger social structures broadly understood that she inhabits. These practices inform how a person relates to and is perceived by the world around him. Take, for example, the practice of truth telling. One tells the truth because she wants to relate to the world in an honest fashion and to be perceived by others as being an individual of integrity.

¹⁰ The divine aim, also called in process thought the initial aim, is the one God supplies each becoming occasion, and is the initial phase of the development of that occasion's subjective aim. See Farmer, *Beyond the Impasse*, 79.

outcomes in a manner that better conforms to the divine vision embedded in such eschatological metaphors.¹¹

II. PERFORMANCE ANXIETY: THE ΥΠΟΚΡΙΤΗΣ IN MATTHEW 6:1–18

In 6:1–18 the author begins with a stern admonition to his readers: Προσέχετε [δὲ] τὴν δικαιοσύνην ὑμῶν μὴ ποιεῖν ἔμπροσθεν τῶν ἀνθρώπων πρὸς τὸ θεαθῆναι αὐτοῖς· εἰ δὲ μὴ γε, μισθὸν οὐκ ἔχετε παρὰ τῷ πατρὶ ὑμῶν τῷ ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς. This statement points to the gravity with which these acts are to be performed. Whenever we perform righteous acts we are to do so in a critical manner, respecting and preserving their intended or preferred outcomes rather than simply performing them.¹² Many have connected this verse with Matthew's understanding of superabundant righteousness, expressed earlier in the SM, which in effect makes this section a clarification of the earlier concept and its claim (see 5:48).¹³ Matthew's concern with δικαιοσύνη is an important aspect of his narrative that scholars have long recognized. The perennial problem has been how to understand or define it. Influenced by modern conceptualizations, scholars have tended to understand it as a decidedly individual concern, although some communal benefit may arise as a byproduct. Such an understanding overlooks, however, the socially-embedded character of first-century CE Mediterranean society. A more appropriate understanding of δικαιοσύνη would be one of individual-in-community rather than individual over (or to the exclusion of) community. Thus, superabundant righteousness (and its practices)

¹¹ It should be noted that Matthew, alone among the canonical gospels, uses the term ἐκκλησία in 16:18 and 18:17. This is yet another way in which the evangelist highlights the importance of community to his narrative, and further underscores his distinctive understanding of what such a community entails. The ἐκκλησία Matthew envisions is apparently one with a strongly egalitarian ethos—possibly reminiscent of the form of political organization that dominated fourth-century BCE Athens called by the same name.

¹² I understand this section of Matthew's narrative as a cultic διδασχὴ. See Hans Dieter Betz, *Sermon on the Mount: A Commentary on the Sermon on the Mount, including the Sermon on the Plain (Matthew 5:3–7:27 and Luke 6:20–49)* (Hermeneia; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1995), 330–35, for a discussion of literary genre and function.

¹³ E.g., Donald Senior, *Matthew* (ANTC; Nashville: Abingdon, 1998), 82; David E. Garland, *Reading Matthew: A Literary and Theological Commentary* (Reading the New Testament; Macon: Smyth and Helwys, 2001), 77; and Nolland, *The Gospel of Matthew*, 273, among others.

is that form of life that enhances the individual and the community simultaneously.¹⁴

What is similarly interesting about the construction of this statement is the literary relationship between προσέχετε and ἔχετε. The author appears to draw a causal relationship between acts performed beforehand and their influence on not only the performance of the act itself, but also its desired outcome. The text illustrates that what “happens in later occasions of the route is deeply affected by what happened in earlier occasions, but it is not simply repetitive.”¹⁵ In other words, the past deeply influences and heavily determines the outcomes we experience in the future. Thus, careful attention must be paid repeatedly to the *qualia* or kind of energy that one releases when performing or preparing to perform such acts. If not performed with its intended outcome in view, the preceding events that influence the desired result may transform the outcome into a mere caricature of itself.¹⁶

A. *Almsgiving*

The three acts of δικαιοσύνη highlighted in this section—almsgiving, prayer, and fasting—were central to the emergent Judaism of the Second Temple period and have been central to rabbinic Judaism since its inception.¹⁷ The first, almsgiving (ἐλεημοσύνη), was a form of benevolence (or philanthropy) meant to alleviate the desperate conditions of the poor.¹⁸ As evidenced here, the practice of “doing almsgiving” (ποιεῖν ἐλεημοσύνην) was understood as a practice “required by the Torah and not merely a social obligation,” at least among a certain group of financially capable believers.¹⁹ This then placed it in a category somewhat different from its Greco-Roman analogue, εὐεργεσία.

¹⁴ For a discussion of the importance of δικαιοσύνη to Matthew’s gospel as well as an alternative understanding of how it is used, see David P. Scaer, *Discourses in Matthew: Jesus Teaches the Church* (St. Louis: Concordia, 2004), 245–63, esp. 259, where he defines righteousness as “what God does in Jesus.”

¹⁵ Farmer, *Beyond the Impasse*, 113.

¹⁶ For a discussion of *qualia* and the energy individuals release through a causal chain of events, see Elizabeth M. Kraus, *The Metaphysics of Experience: A Companion to Whitehead’s Process and Reality* (American Philosophy Series; New York: Fordham University Press, 1998), 30–35.

¹⁷ See e.g., Norman H. Snaith, *The Jews from Cyrus to Herod* (Wallington: Religious Education Press, 1949), 151.

¹⁸ See e.g., David D. Dalin, “Judaism’s War on Poverty,” *Policy Review* 85 (1997): 28–33; John Topel, “The Tarnished Golden Rule (Luke 6:31): The Inescapable Radicalness of Christian Ethics,” *TS* 59 (1998): 475–85.

¹⁹ Betz, *Sermon on the Mount*, 354.

The generally accepted idea attributed to the practice of εὐεργεσία in the ancient world is one of personal aggrandizement for the benefit of the larger community. It was not a social obligation in the sense of it being a political or even religious requirement. It was, however, a strong political expectation that the wealthy would act as benefactors for the city at large. Numerous inscriptions from the ancient world attest to the powerful influence of this expectation. By contrast, ἐλεημοσύνη was considered a religious obligation by Jews of a certain class and religious orientation.²⁰ Even the audiences are different. Civic benefaction or euergetism was done on behalf of the citizens (εὐεργέτης τοῦ δήμου). Ἐλεημοσύνη was done on behalf of the “poor”—individuals about whom God is concerned as expressed through the Torah.²¹

The designated hypocritical action in this text is outlined in the following fashion: Ὅταν οὖν ποιῇς ἐλεημοσύνην, μὴ σαλπίσης ἔμπροσθέν σου, ὥσπερ οἱ ὑποκριταὶ ποιοῦσιν ἐν ταῖς συναγωγαῖς καὶ ἐν ταῖς ῥύμαις, ὅπως δοξασθῶσιν ὑπὸ τῶν ἀνθρώπων· ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν, ἀπέχουσιν τὸν μισθὸν αὐτῶν (6:2).²² It must first be observed that this language sounds hyperbolic. It appears highly unlikely that individuals were as ostentatious in their almsgiving as this description illustrates—sounding a trumpet when they gave alms. Some commentators believe that this is an example of satire, which means that it must contain some element of truth. They then resolve the problem by maintaining that “one should take ‘blowing the trumpet’ as a figure of speech pointing to the entire gamut of religious ostentation and pomposity.”²³

A problem still exists, however. Even if it is not true that individuals blew trumpets when giving their alms, how are we to deal with the reference to “in the synagogues and in the city streets?” This appears to be a concrete act that cannot be simply dismissed under the umbrella of hyperbolic rhetoric. Although blowing one’s own horn may be understood as an outrageous notion, it does not mean that

²⁰ Shaye J. D. Cohen, *From the Maccabees to the Mishnah* (LEC; ed. Wayne A. Meeks; Philadelphia: Westminster, 1987), 78.

²¹ A difference must be drawn between those whom we normally think of as the “poor” (i.e., the financially destitute) and those the HB and other ANE texts classify as the “poor” (i.e., those who were in need of protection and assistance regardless of financial resources).

²² For a short discussion of so-called hypocrisy in almsgiving among Jews, see G. H. Box, *Judaism in the Greek Period, from the Rise of Alexander the Great to the Intervention of Rome (333–63 BC)* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1932), 74.

²³ Betz, *Sermon on the Mount*, 356; cf. Ulrich Luz, *Matthew 1–7* (CC; trans. Wilhelm C. Linss; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1989), 357.

the remaining statement should be considered hyperbolic as well. Is there a way in which one could blow one's own horn in such places without actually doing it? The answer may lie in further consideration of εὐεργεσία. From later evidence, we know that early Christians were influenced by the Greco-Roman practice of civic benefaction.²⁴ Even the Gospel of Luke, makes reference to the practice of εὐεργεσία (e.g., Luke 22:25). Is it possible that the (rhetorical) context behind this discussion of a decidedly Jewish practice is the Christian struggle to differentiate between benevolence and benefaction? If so, then the relevance of categorization moves to the foreground.

Benefaction was for the benefit of the citizens of the city, a decidedly political practice. Almsgiving or benevolence was for the immediate benefit of the poor, but its intended beneficiary was God—or more pointedly God's vision for the world—a decidedly religious practice (see, e.g., Matt 5:16).²⁵ This distinction could be obscured easily in a world where religion was a sphere of existence integrated into one's social and/or political performances.²⁶ Inscriptions, then, would be powerful advertisements for one's generosity, even when found in places where the presumed motivation for such acts was religious devotion. An inscription would be one way of blowing one's own horn without literally doing so in the world of the first century CE. In addition, this is something for which we have evidence in relative abundance. Many synagogues in Israel, apparently, were either built or decorated through the gifts of congregants or other interested benefactors.²⁷ The same was true of those προσεύχαι built outside of Israel.

The immediate didactic context of this discussion in the SM may be Jewish, but its intended audience in Matthew is its Christian readers. The struggle to differentiate between an act of religious benevolence

²⁴ See my essay on this in a forthcoming history of prayer entitled "Piety and Proclamation: Gregory of Nyssa's Sermons on the Lord's Prayer." See also Bruce Winter, *Seek the Welfare of the City: Christians as Benefactors and Citizens* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1994), 11–60, which argues that even the earliest Christians were influenced by this practice.

²⁵ By God's vision for the world I mean the same thing as the divine aim. See note 10 above.

²⁶ For the inseparability of moral and cultic realms in ancient Jewish practices like almsgiving, see, e.g., Bruce Chilton, *The Temple of Jesus: His Sacrificial Program within a Cultural History of Sacrifice* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1992), 124.

²⁷ See, e.g., Lee I. Levine, *Judaism and Hellenism in Antiquity: Conflict or Confluence?* (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1998), 141, 147, 170–71.

and one of civic benefaction was a predicament those in the early Christian community faced.²⁸ The line between almsgiving and benefaction may have been a relatively easy one to cross, especially in an environment of individuals of some financial means.²⁹ To an outsider, like Jesus in the narrative, a gift like a mosaic might be perceived as readily as a show of personal aggrandizement as it might be one of religious devotion.³⁰

Of course, the central dilemma confronting the almsgiver in Matt 6:1–18 is that of intended audience and outcome. The ὑποκριτής, we are told, has others as his intended audience (6:2). They will accord him honor or glory, a normal response to civic benefaction.³¹ Either through inscriptions or maybe other means, the practice of almsgiving was one by which a conscientious individual could garner honor for himself. In other words, it was a mechanism by which an individual could distinguish himself over against the larger community of which he was a part—a way by which she could transcend her social embeddedness. Maybe such self-promotion was what the author of the SM meant when he spoke of ὑπόκριται trumpeting their generous gifts in the synagogues and on the street corners. Inscriptions were generosity writ large.³²

²⁸ See W. D. Davies, *Christian Origins and Judaism* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1962), 202; and Peter Brown, *Poverty and Moral Leadership in the Late Roman Empire* (Hanover: University Press of New England, 2002), passim.

²⁹ I should point out here my working premises when it comes to the author of this gospel and his original community. First, I believe the evangelist to be an individual of non-Jewish origin, who argues for the appropriation of at least a certain understanding of Judaism in his church community. Second, I do not understand this church community to be a sectarian group within the larger Jewish enterprise, but as an emerging, potentially diverse, community of relatively affluent individuals. For a further discussion of my understanding of the author see my forthcoming article, “Matthew, Gospel of,” in the *New Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*. For a further discussion of Matthew's community as a group of affluent individuals, see Michael H. Crosby, *House of Disciples: Church, Economics, and Justice in Matthew* (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis, 1988), 42; Jack Dean Kingsbury, “The Verb *Akolouthēin* (“To Follow”) as an Index of Matthew's View of His Community,” *JBL* 97 (1978): 67–73; W. D. Davies and D. C. Allison, *Matthew 19–28* (ICC; New York: T & T Clark, 2004), 47–48, 703–4.

³⁰ I do not consider this discourse in Matthew to be a criticism of Jewish practices. The author places Jesus in a narrative world where particular Jewish religious practices are criticized, but we should not then assume that this means the author is anti-Jewish. The narrative is actually an indirect discourse concerning the practices of the early Christian community.

³¹ See e.g., R. A. Kearsley, “A Civic Benefactor of the First Century in Asia Minor,” *NewDocs* 7 (1994): 240.

³² The same reasoning can be found in Betz, *Sermon on the Mount*, 356–57.

What also distinguishes an adequate (or felicitous) cultic act from one that is not is the intended outcome. Here Matthew 6 is relatively silent. We can only infer from the associated practice intended to correct the hypocrisy—"do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing"—what the author may have envisioned (6:3). Here the practice is one that is inconspicuous and relinquishes any visible control over the outcome of the performance. *Prima facie*, we might infer that the practice counteracts the implied intended outcome sought by the ὑποκριτής. If so, then it appears reasonable to conclude that the ὑποκριτής sought somehow to control the outcome achieved by her performance. The hypocritical practice of almsgiving is one by which the philanthropist seeks not only honor, but also intends to influence the transformation brought about by the gift itself. To restate the claim in another fashion: the almsgiver is a ὑποκριτής if she intends to use her gift as a means of transforming the world into her vision of what should be rather than the divine aim as expressed through the teachings of Jesus. Jews had long recognized that central to the Torah's mandate for almsgiving was the idea that something was "wrong" with the world that needed to be corrected.³³ The potential problem with almsgiving, however, resided in the temptation of the philanthropic individual to dictate the outcome(s) resulting from her gift.³⁴ The same was true of the Christian appropriation of the practice, as least according to the SM.

So far I have studiously avoided addressing the question of reward (μισθός) and its relationship to the performance of almsgiving, a discussion which influences the connection made between performance and outcome as framed by this discussion. Hans Dieter Betz and others are correct in their determination that the reward being discussed in this passage is eschatological.³⁵ When Betz maintains that the δικαιοσύνη "demanded of humans is recognized as the condition of redemption," he points to something potentially more profound than just an eschatological payoff.³⁶ That is, the agency—the very performance—of

³³ See S. Schechter, *Studies in Judaism, Second Series* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1908), 81.

³⁴ Some rabbis believed a limit should be placed on how much an individual could give in order to avoid undue influence over the application of the gift. See Schechter, *Studies in Judaism*, 172.

³⁵ Hans Dieter Betz, *Essays on the Sermon on the Mount* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1988), 61.

³⁶ *Ibid.*

individuals is the necessary condition for the possibility of redemption in the first place.³⁷ Reward then is not to be understood as an enhancement of the individual alone, but of the individual-in-community. In fact, there is no indication in the SM that the disciple should expect any sort of reward other than “treasures in heaven” (6:20). Thus, lacking in any sort of contemporary enhancement of honor or material prosperity, the disciple appropriating this cultic practice expects a reward that advances something greater than her and her interests. I contend that this greater thing is the development of a community that better conforms to God’s vision, understood in this text as the kingdom. In this sense the reward is the actualization of the intended outcome of the performance.

The author of the SM places almsgiving in the category of cultic acts. By this we are supposed to understand its performance as pertaining to the worship of God. Through worship we express our belief in the worthiness of God. This is not its ending point, however. Through worship we commit ourselves to God’s vision for ourselves, others, the larger polity, and the universe generally. Almsgiving in this sense means committing one’s self to God’s vision of the world—or, more technically, the divine aim—through transformative acts of generosity.³⁸ Through almsgiving the believer completes his worship of God by acting in a manner that brings into being the kingdom.

By contrast, the hypocrite gives alms, but does so in order to receive acclaim for her generosity from the crowd and to direct the way in which the world is transformed through it. In fact, almsgiving may have been a way for some to reinforce social structures that kept the objects of such charity marginalized. One of the effects of euergetism, for example, was to keep the lower classes in place. Ramsay MacMullen highlights this unfortunate outcome when he observes, “Status got in the way of charity.”³⁹ Although these acts were charitable, they were not transformative. Thus, almsgiving, even though a religious obligation, did not do much to transform the social structures that necessitated the

³⁷ Such a view of human agency appears to be entirely consistent with emerging rabbinic understandings as codified in the Mishnah and expressed in phrases like “sanctifying the Name,” a phrase also found in the SM. See Daniel Patte, *Paul’s Faith and the Power of the Gospel: A Structural Introduction to the Pauline Letters* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1983), 87–121, especially 112–17 where he discusses halakah.

³⁸ For a definition of the divine or initial aim, see note 10 above.

³⁹ Ramsay MacMullen, *Roman Social Relations 50 BC to AD 284* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1974), 118.

practice itself. This reveals then a most hollow form of performance: an individual who gives out of commitment to the obligation without committing herself to the vision that is the foundation of this obligation as well.

In his effort to appropriate the practice of almsgiving, Matthew distinguishes between adequate and inadequate forms of the act. The inadequate performance of doing alms meant acting without critical regard for the audience or outcome. Embedded in this critique is the idea of a relational understanding of activity. In this case, the past experience of the almsgiver largely influences how he will understand and enact his performance. Yet, as the critique indicates, this performance need not be simply another repetition of past occasions. A new creative expression is possible. Still, what keeps this act hollow is that it avoids being anything other than a mere repetition of the past.

The preferred practice of almsgiving, by contrast, is one by which a transformative energy is released through a relational network. The intended outcome is the creative transformation of the world into the kingdom of God. As a consequence then, the true audience for such an action is God rather than other human beings. By appropriating this practice, Matthew's community has taken upon itself the responsibility of performing this act carefully.

We should be careful not to associate the hypocritical performance of almsgiving with the disingenuous believer, but rather with the self-important or unduly egotistical one.⁴⁰ Later theologians may have picked up on this insight and sought to alleviate the deceptive potential to "play God" in such situations. Clement of Alexandria proposes his own remedy for the dilemma: "Do not yourself decide who is worthy and who unworthy, for you may happen to be quite mistaken in your opinion; so that when in doubt through ignorance it is better to do good even to the unworthy for the sake of the worthy than by being on your guard against the less good not to light upon the virtuous at all" (*Quis div.* 33.5–10 [Butterworth, LCL]). This remedy does not appear critical at all, at least in the sense commonly understood. Yet, it may be consistent with the practice of superabundant righteousness

⁴⁰ Inconspicuous piety, as described by most scholars, is the positive way to state this claim. Viewed through my framework of individual-in-community, the inconspicuous disciple is one who values the welfare and enhancement of the community as much as she does her own. Thus, she would avoid acts that promote the individual above or to the detriment of the community.

outlined earlier in the SM. Relinquishing control over the outcome of one's generosity—what Clement of Alexandria's comment implies—is a central concern of the portion of the SM under consideration. The critical component here may be an appraisal of one's self-importance and the need to advance it rather than the motive(s) of the individual(s) requesting assistance.

B. *Prayer*

The second performance outlined in this διδασχὴ is that of prayer (προσευχή). The hypocritical action here is described in this way in 6:5: Καὶ ὅταν προσεύχησθε, οὐκ ἔσεσθε ὡς οἱ ὑποκριταί· ὅτι φιλοῦσιν ἐν ταῖς συναγωγαῖς καὶ ἐν ταῖς γωνίαις τῶν πλατειῶν ἐστῶτες προσεύχεσθαι, ὥπως φανῶσιν τοῖς ἀνθρώποις. If we assume that the same logic applies here as before, then the performance of prayer should seek to rectify the dissonance between what-is-and-should-not-be and what-could-be-and-is-not.⁴¹

The subsequent instruction on the avoidance of babbling during prayer, as well as the inclusion of the Lord's Prayer, points to a way in addition to private prayer that the hypocritical performance of prayer can be corrected (6:7–13).⁴² Nowhere in 6:7–13 is the disciple instructed to conduct her prayer in private, as she is in the preceding verses. The absence of such an instruction may not prove determinative for understanding the point of the passage, but it does raise questions nevertheless. Babbling is something that can be avoided in both public and private prayer. Likewise, the Lord's Prayer is decidedly communal in its language, and many believe it was meant to be performed in a public setting. Still, what distinguishes these instructions from the hypocritical action described in 6:5 is that they cast a vision of God and God's activity that contradicts any selfish understanding of the performance. In an earlier verse, the person seeking to communicate with God is assured that "your Father knows what you need before you ask him" (6:6). Self-serving prayer is thus excluded. In the instance

⁴¹ This language is adapted from Kraus, *The Metaphysics of Experience*, 101.

⁴² In relating 6:5–6 to 6:7–8 and 6:9–13 we face the well-known form-critical difficulty of these corrective measures coming from a different source or sources. In my approach to this passage, it is not decisive that this problem be resolved. My assumption is that Matthew, at the very least, introduces these texts in order to offer a corrective to the hypocritical practice he critiques. For a more in-depth discussion of the form-critical issues, see Betz, *Sermon on the Mount*, 349, 363.

of babbling, the reader is told that “many words” will not influence the divine activity (6:7). In this way the omnibenevolence of God is highlighted and reinforced. In yet another instance, the individual is instructed to pray in a manner that accords with God’s vision for the world. This vision is not about “me” and “my,” but about “we” and “our.” The prayer instruction provided in this section is one that places community at the center of the disciple’s petition. Placing this understanding of 6:7–13 within the context of the critique of performance outlined above, we can surmise that part of the hypocrisy involved in the prayer act is that it is overly egocentric, taking into account only the needs of the individual to the neglect of the needs of the larger community and the world as such.

Yet, this understanding does not resolve entirely the problem of hypocrisy as outlined in 6:5. There the critique centers squarely on those who “love (it) when in the synagogues and on the street corners they stand praying in order that they show themselves to the people.” In order to unravel this problem, we should consider the message such an action might send to others. Betz is most certainly correct when he says that this practice of prayer “amounts to a demonstration of religious and even political power. Such visibility leaves no doubt about who is in charge of religion.”⁴³ As in the case of almsgiving, the public practice of prayer can be perceived as yet another method by which those in power maintained and highlighted their superiority over others.⁴⁴ Such was definitely true in Roman religion, for example. Dionysius of Halicarnassus pointed out the superior position of Roman citizens even in matters of religion (*Ant. rom.* 2.73.1, 2): “The *pontifices* have authority over the most important matters in the Roman state. . . . For private citizens who are not knowledgeable about religious matters concerning the gods and divine spirits, the *pontifices* are explainers and interpreters.”⁴⁵ In Judaism, scribes, Pharisees, priests, and other com-

⁴³ Betz, *Sermon on the Mount*, 362.

⁴⁴ The implications of this democratizing of religious power are enormous. Take, for example, the religious practices of women. As far as we can tell, men controlled the religious institutions, at least in the public sphere. Women in formative Judaism, in particular, were barred from exercising ritual leadership—again, at least as far as the majority of evidence indicates. Moving prayer into the sphere of the household and making it a private act then would amount to an equalizing of their leadership opportunities. The absence of the religious specialist would thus suggest an egalitarian communal vision.

⁴⁵ Translation in Shelton, *As the Romans Did*, 384, 385.

munity leaders held comparable positions as religious specialists. Again, the hypocritical character of the act is identified as the maintenance of present social structures that are antithetical to the vision God has for the world.

The introduction of the instruction against babbling, as well as that of the Lord's Prayer, is thus understandable because of their anti-egotistical orientations. The type of kingdom invoked in "your kingdom come" may displace the contemporary prevailing social order, especially if the egalitarian ethos of Matthew's concept of community is taken seriously (6:10). Most definitely, it would not be one in which only a few prosper while the majority are condemned to abject misery. A central tenet of the Lord's Prayer, expressed as early as the ἐπίκλησις, is that it is inappropriate to ask for something for one's self that one would not simultaneously request for all others.⁴⁶ Such an idea leads inevitably to the recognition that major social change would be necessary for such a vision to become a reality. This subversion of the status quo would alter the power structures radically.⁴⁷ The prayer performance, like that of almsgiving, is meant to have a transformative effect, disturbing the established structures and bringing into being a world in which needs, both human and divine, are met within a vast and complex relational network. The self-important or hypocritical performance of prayer falls short of such a transformative aim. The appropriate performance of prayer is one that places relationality and, thus, community at the center of its orientation.

C. *Fasting*

The third performance mentioned in this passage is fasting (νηστίας): Ὅταν δὲ νηστεύητε, μὴ γίνεσθε ὡς οἱ ὑποκριταὶ σκυθρωποὶ (Matt 6:16). The verse describes in a technical fashion the method employed by those performing the act: "for they [ἀφανίζουσιν] their faces" (6:16c). While the exact meaning of ἀφανίζω is disputed, most have

⁴⁶ See Betz, *Sermon on the Mount*, 382, 388–89.

⁴⁷ John Cobb and David Ray Griffin point to this aspect of God's activity when they proclaim, "[No] type of social order is to be maintained if it no longer tends to maximize the enjoyment of the members of the society. Also, it is impossible for any form of social order to continue indefinitely to be instrumentally good. God, far from being the Sanctioner of the Status Quo, is the source of some of the chaos in the world" (John Cobb and David Ray Griffin, *Process Theology: An Introductory Exposition* [Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1976], 60).

taken it as an indication of an individual with an unwashed face, possibly even smearing his face with ashes or covering it with a cloth.⁴⁸ The purpose of such an act is clear: “in order to appear to people as those who are fasting” (6:16d). This statement even contains a bit of word play—ἀφανίζειν (“to smear”) and φαίνω (“to appear”)—to highlight the apparent devoutness of the individual who is fasting. Again, we might assume that the same logic applies here as elsewhere.

What distinguishes fasting from the other performances already mentioned is that it most directly expresses the conviction that there is something “wrong” with the world. Fasting refers to the practice of refraining from eating and often drinking over a specific time period in order to communicate to others that something is wrong. It can also be understood more broadly as a form of mourning: the inability to eat, sleep, worry about one’s looks, clothing, and the like accompany this state. One conspicuous example can be found in the death of a spouse. When a spouse dies, grief is often communicated to others by the inability to eat (fasting), inability to sleep (keeping vigil), lack of concern about clothing, and lack of concern about looks.⁴⁹ Interestingly, beggars were also persons who led a life that involved nearly all the dimensions of mourning. They are unkempt, shabbily clothed, unbathed, and undernourished. As it is when confronted by the beggar, the appearance of the mourner underscores a disturbing reality that beseeches the observer’s response.

Unlike most forms of panhandling, fasting is a form of self-imposed social humiliation. As such, it is intended to get the attention of other persons so that they might respond appropriately. The Israelite custom, for example, was to perform some gesture of ritualized mourning, like fasting, in the face of social disaster (e.g., Isa 58:3–6; Jer 14:12; Joel 1:14). This practice of mourning was intended as a form of communication with God. In a similar fashion, the individual who fasts intends to communicate with an audience. The problem identified in this passage is that the imagined audience is not the real audience. Instead of serving as a form of social humiliation, fasting is described here as an occasion for pious self-aggrandizement. Mourning became an occasion for

⁴⁸ Betz, *Sermon on the Mount*, 421.

⁴⁹ I have adopted this understanding of fasting as a ritual of mourning from Bruce J. Malina and Richard L. Rohrbaugh, *Social-Science Commentary on the Gospels* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1992), 60, 64.

an odd form of celebration, an acknowledgment of the deep devotion or piety (εὐσέβεια) of the individual who is fasting.

The corrective action appears to turn the performance on its head: “But when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face so that you may not appear to people as one who is fasting” (Matt 6:17–18). Like the acts of almsgiving and prayer, the one who fasts is instructed to do so inconspicuously. It is a matter of internalizing the performances but not personalizing them in the sense of using them as occasions for self-promotion. Fasting in this instance is not intended to request assistance solely for the individual, but as an acknowledgment of something askew in the larger order of social arrangements. The ὑποκριτής fasts in order to improve her own spiritual status in relationship to God, but more importantly to other human beings. This egocentric religious act focuses attention squarely on the self to the neglect of the larger communal issues that demand attention as well. When decidedly self-important in its orientation, the performance of fasting neglects its transformational capacity. As with the other practices, the immediate context of the practice of fasting may be Jewish, but the appropriated understanding is patently Christian.

What this short examination of Matthew 6:1–18 has demonstrated is that the author employs the term ὑποκριτής to refer to cultic performances that are hollow and egocentric, seeking to maintain the status quo, and garnering acclaim for the individual performing them. On the surface, this may not be how these performances are perceived. More often than not they will come across to others as devout, but upon critical reflection they undermine the very thing they should promote. In fact, the SM casts the ὑποκριτής as the self-important practitioner, someone who performs his acts out of religious obligation or for the purpose of self-advancement without any real regard for the larger implications or meanings of such acts.

III. ALIENATED PERFORMANCE

Earlier, I labeled such hypocritical performances as alienating practices. By alienation I meant a negative form of relationality, a pattern of communal interaction that is inherently contradictory in which individuals and groups are caught in a model of behavior contrary to their own good, manifest in the immediacy of personal relations and in the complicated structures of institutions. Alienation means “contradiction,

paradox, [and] strains of experience” radically lacking any conformation of appearance to reality.⁵⁰ Often in its personal expression, it is a pattern in which people suffer from the corrupting consequences of their own life-activities. In its political expression, that lack of conformation is found in any institutionalized form that, “however grand in technical proficiency and organizational elegance, is sadly deficient in moral truth and thus in the qualities of true community.”⁵¹ In the end, alienation in its attitudinal, personal, and institutional forms is a violation of peace and thus destructive of *κοινωνία*.⁵²

To think about how the performance of the *ὑποκριτής* is an alienated performance, we need to take seriously the relative ranking of practices we are given in Matt 5:23–24. There the author says that reconciliation—the re-formation of *κοινωνία*—takes precedence over particular religious obligations. Viewed in another light, the SM at least implies that the “experience” of community is a religious obligation itself.⁵³ In my estimation, religious obligations serve to enact and maintain *κοινωνία*, not only on earth among human and nonhuman life but also in heaven among the created order and God (see 6:10). They are acts of worship demonstrating our commitment to God’s vision for the universe, which includes an embedded understanding that all reality is social (or relational) in character.

Although it is easy for us to imagine prayer and fasting as acts of worship, the same cannot always be said of almsgiving.⁵⁴ It would be fair to say that we see the practice as being largely an ethical concern rather than an act of worship. Still, the SM places this act in the cultic

⁵⁰ Douglas Sturm, *Community and Alienation: Essays on Process Thought and Public Life* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1988), 43. My understanding of alienation here and elsewhere is an adaptation of Sturm’s idea.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 43.

⁵² By peace I mean “a quality in experience running counter to those contradictions between appearance and reality that constitute alienation” (*Ibid.*, 51).

⁵³ By experience I mean the creation, cultivation, maintenance, and reformation of a complex and vast web of relationships we commonly characterize as community. In this social network, individuals and groups influence the development of the whole, as they are also influenced by the whole as well. In this sense I am referring to the idea of polity as developed by Sturm, who says, “[Polity] is the inclusive form of coordinated activity among persons and groups that incorporates more or less adequately the conditions and qualities of civilization: truth, beauty, art, adventure, peace” (*Ibid.*, 42).

⁵⁴ See e.g., Betz, *Sermon on the Mount*, 334–35, 353–61, who fails to differentiate clearly between the ethical and the religious when it comes to a performance such as almsgiving. The giving here is not just an ethical response to a completed act of worship. It is an act of worship itself.

category, which, like prayer and fasting, makes it an expression of our belief in the worthiness of God and God's vision for the world. Thus, it should have a transformative aim, changing social structures that do not conform to the quality of existence God seeks for our shared life. In this sense it is proper to say that through almsgiving we complete our worship of God.

That such a performance can degenerate into an alienated practice is not easy for one to contemplate. Lavish financial expenditures, even when clothed in religious garb, are misguided displays of self-importance if they fail to transform (or at the very least influence) the coordinated pattern of activity that is the deep structure of the world's togetherness. As Douglas Sturm remarks, "[The] concern of God is not only with the interior disposition of one's psychic life. It is also with the forms and texture of communal life."⁵⁵ In the SM we are instructed to perform religious obligations like almsgiving, but in a manner that takes seriously their intended audience and outcomes. This includes the extra-personal dimension of our piety that for the ancients constituted the venerable coalition between theology and political theory. In a similar manner, prayer is not just an act "whereby we center ourselves around and align ourselves with the sacred" in some limited personal sense.⁵⁶ If this is all prayer accomplishes, then it is only an anemic act of worship and a robust display of self-importance. It is an alienated practice redolent with the Matthean understanding of hypocrisy. By contrast, prayer, as a socially embedded and interested performance, changes things. The same is true of fasting. Its performance, even in an inconspicuous manner, holds within itself the recognition of alienation and the transformational capacity to overcome it. What makes the performance of the ὑποκριτής an alienated one is that it places self-importance at the center of the disciple's concern, neglecting the social reality that is the very nature of life itself.

The problem of alienated practices can only be addressed through a critical re-focusing on the larger vision God has provided for us in eschatological images of the kingdom, the wedding feast, the New Jerusalem, and others. Acts of piety divorced from a larger vision of the transformative capacity of human agency amount to performances that

⁵⁵ Sturm, *Community and Alienation*, 93.

⁵⁶ C. Robert Mesle, *Process Theology: A Basic Introduction* (St. Louis: Chalice, 1993), 111. It should be pointed out, however, that this limited understanding of prayer is not what Mesle advocates.

lack global value. What the believer does may be a localized instantiation of this larger vision, but it is the larger vision that envelops it as an act of eternal significance.

IV. SALVIFIC PERFORMANCE

The ancients were individuals deeply embedded in a social conception of reality. What Aristotle had conceived of as a necessary partnership (κοινωνία) was understood by many as a deep characteristic of πολιτεία itself. To read the Gospel of Matthew (and specifically this section of the SM) then from the perspective of a post-Hobbesian can be misleading to say the least. The self-importance of the individual is now assumed as natural, expressed in a myriad number of performances—religious and non-religious—including the invocation of rights language, that at the very least complicate, if not subvert, the distinctive idea of κοινωνία promoted in the SM as well as in the best ideas of the ancients generally. In our modern world, liberty may have become its own form of tyranny.

The impulse for modern democratic institutions was based on a negative evaluation of political structures, which many believed compressed the creativity and flourishing of the individual.⁵⁷ Understandably, the contrasting vision of society cast by English liberalism and others was one of protecting and promoting the individual. This idea is underscored by A. D. Lindsay, who writes, “Democratic theory in its modern beginnings reflected a society in which men thought it more important to say what the state should not do than to say what it should do. The main emphasis of this early theory is negative.”⁵⁸ The genius of this form of polity, however, was its shrewd observation that tyranny was not a problem confined exclusively to the rule of monarchs. Thus, rights as conceived by these theorists constituted claims against a government. They were a “preserve for the freedom of the citizenry.”⁵⁹ Such a vision contrasts sharply with the ancient, particularly Aristotelian, vision of

⁵⁷ For a discussion of oppression as the compression of human creativity, see Theodore Walker, Jr., *Mothership Connections: A Black Atlantic Synthesis of Neoclassical Metaphysics and Black Theology* (SUNY Series in Constructive Postmodern Thought; ed. David Ray Griffin; Albany: State University of New York Press, 2004), 46–47.

⁵⁸ A. D. Lindsay, *The Modern Democratic State* (London: Oxford University Press, 1943), 116.

⁵⁹ Sturm, *Community and Alienation*, 177.

πολιτεία, which, at its best, emphasized participation over protection.⁶⁰ As well, the communal orientation one finds in Matt 6:1–18 is one that is not conversant with the tyrannical propensities of even democratic social configurations. Nevertheless, the positive appraisal of participation one finds in this text, including its linkage of communal interaction to δικαιοσύνη and as a result the divine aim, should not be overlooked. In the author's appropriation of specific Jewish cultic practices, one sees a distinctive vision of community (or πολιτεία more broadly) that rivals the existing social visions of pre-rabbinic Judaism and the Roman imperial establishment.⁶¹ Whereas these specific religious performances undergirded and accentuated social distinctions in their Jewish context, in their new Christian expression their aim is to conform to and bring into being a world that better represents the divine aim or vision. How this vision becomes instantiated, however, appears to be largely dependent upon the performance of those committed to it.

One way to view the series of Matthean parables regarding the judgment that precede the passion narrative is through this lens of community enhancement (24:30–25:46). In this case, the parable of the wicked overseer is most instructive, especially since it invokes the language of hypocrisy as well (24:45–51). Many have taken this parable, also found in Q, as an admonition to those in leadership in the church

⁶⁰ I am not arguing that we should adopt without qualification any particular ancient conception of πολιτεία. Each in its own right has severe deficiencies. What I am arguing, by contrast, is that we reconsider the foundational visions behind these constructions—visions that acknowledge as fundamental the social character of existence and the positive importance of participation as a practice of forming and sustaining community. The fact that love (φίλια) was understood as an important component motivating such participation, at least in its Aristotelian conception, should not be overlooked as well. John Dewey is most certainly correct when he writes, “The idea of democracy is a wider and fuller idea than can be exemplified in the state even at its best. To be realized it must affect all modes of human association, the family, the school, industry, religion... [1] From the standpoint of the individual, it consists [a] in having a responsible share according to capacity in forming and directing the activities of the groups to which one belongs and [b] in participating according to need in the values which the groups sustain. [2] From the standpoint of the groups, it demands liberation of the potentialities of members of a group in harmony with the interests and goods which are common” (John Dewey, *The Public and Its Problems* [Chicago: Swallow, 1954], 143, 147).

⁶¹ By pre-rabbinic Judaism I mean the time period before the successful establishment of undisputed rabbinic control over the synagogues, including more pointedly the pre-70 CE period when the Jerusalem temple exercised major influence over the practice and understanding of Judaism. This is especially true if Cohen is correct in his determination that rabbinic Judaism constituted a “democratization” of the religion. See Cohen, *From the Maccabees to the Mishnah*, 101–3.

to be vigilant regarding their responsibilities.⁶² However, Ulrich Luz appears to be most correct when he concludes, “Matthew appears not to make a distinction here between officeholders and ordinary Christians.”⁶³ Here the tension between self-importance and community is highlighted in graphic fashion. The faithful and wise slave is one who recognizes the relational nature of his position and performs his duties accordingly (24:45–47). The wicked slave is one who acts with disregard for his fellow slaves, treating them violently and passing the time with acts of self-indulgence (24:48–49). Although the subsequent imagery is repulsive, the larger message is clear: The fate of the ὑποκριτής is one of condemnation for neglecting to care for one’s fellow human beings.⁶⁴ In other words, “watching means cohumanity; it means love.”⁶⁵

What one encounters in Matthew 6:1–18 is a διδασχὴ designed to reorient the Christian appropriation of the Jewish cultic practices of almsgiving, prayer, and fasting, at least as perceived by the author. Through the introduction of the figure of the ὑποκριτής the author is able to assess critically the adequacy of these performances in terms of intended audience and outcome(s). Contrary to the self-important and controlling practice of the ὑποκριτής, the image presented in the narrative is one of a religious practitioner who takes with utmost seriousness her obligation to perform these acts in a manner that fulfills their goal(s) in terms of intended audience (that is, to glorify God) and outcome (that is, the reign of the kingdom of the heavens). Although my attempt here was to “translate” this critical reflection into more contemporary terms and concepts, I believe this reading of the text better conforms to the communal assumptions embedded in the narrative than have previous attempts at explanation.

⁶² See Ulrich Luz, *Matthew 21–28: A Commentary* (Hermeneia; Minneapolis: Fortress, 2005), 221–23, for a discussion of this parable as a part of the Sayings Source (Q). For a discussion of this parable’s application to leaders of the church, see Luz, *Matthew 21–28*, 225; and Davies and Allison, *Matthew 19–28*, 386, who lean towards this sort of interpretation.

⁶³ Luz, *Matthew 21–28*, 225.

⁶⁴ Luz, *Matthew 21–28*, 225, addresses the discomfort felt by modern readers of this parable. His determination to keep the discomfort alive is helpful, I think, because it resists the all too easy temptation on the part of interpreters to sanitize the image of Jesus in the gospel narratives.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

IS MATTHEW 18:15–17 ABOUT “CHURCH DISCIPLINE”?

Sharyn Dowd

INTRODUCTION

It is an honor to be invited to contribute to this volume in recognition of the career of Carl Holladay, my dissertation mentor at Emory University. This essay will focus on two matters of interest to Professor Holladay: textual criticism and the function of the New Testament in the church. The question explored here is whether the primary New Testament text that is cited in discussions of church discipline is about a procedure for ejecting a recalcitrant sinner from fellowship or whether it is about a related, but not identical, situation: the resolution of a conflict between two Christians within the same local expression of the ἐκκλησία.

CONTEXT AND STRUCTURE

Matthew 18 is regarded by many as the fourth of five major discourses in the Gospel and as concerned with the community of Jesus' followers. The discourse is organized as a response to two questions posed by disciples of Jesus: “Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?” (18:1) and “How often should I forgive?” (18:21). The responses of the Matthean Jesus to both questions are not really answers; rather, each response is designed to demonstrate the inappropriateness of the question. The apparent answer in 18:4 to the question of greatness is ironic because if a person were to become aware of his insignificance and dependence (the situation of a child in the first-century Mediterranean world), he would never have asked the disciples' question. The response to Peter's question likewise does not set the limit to forgiveness for which Peter asks, but indicates that forgiveness is limitless. The text under consideration falls into a central section that is framed by the dialogues around the two questions. As we will see, the Matthean Jesus' response to the two inappropriate questions controls the interpretation of the central section. The discourse may be outlined as follows:

- A: 18:1–14: Little ones, not great ones, are God’s concern
 18:1: The disciples ask an **inappropriate question**
 18:2–10: The treatment of little ones has **ultimate consequences** for disciples
 18:12–14: **Parable** of the lost sheep: Little ones must not be left to stray but must be recovered at great cost
- B: 18:15–20: Instructions regarding the lost brother
 18:15–17: The lost brother must not be allowed to stray; extreme measures must be taken to restore broken relationships
 18:18–20: Do not give up prematurely. The presence and power of the Risen Christ can mend even relationships that appear hopelessly ruptured.
- A’: 18:21–35: Forgiveness, not punishment, is God’s concern
 18:21: Peter asks an **inappropriate question**
 18:22: Forgiveness has no limits
 18:23–34: **Parable**: The disciple has little to forgive, compared to what she has been forgiven
 18:35: Unwillingness to forgive has **ultimate consequences** for disciples.

The text in question is structured into a three-part procedure for conflict resolution and reconciliation between Christians:

Case:	15. If your brother sins against you (sg.)
Action 1:	go and reprove him, between you and him alone.
Successful outcome:	If he listens to you,
Result:	you have gained your brother.
Unsuccessful outcome:	16. But if he does not listen
Action 2:	take along with you yet one or two, so that, “by the mouth of two witnesses or three every word may be established.”
[Successful outcome (implied):	<i>If he listens to you and the others,</i>
Result (implied)	<i>you have gained your brother.]</i>
Unsuccessful outcome:	17. But if he refuses to listen to them,
Action 3:	tell the church.
[Successful outcome (implied):	<i>If he listens to the church,</i>
Result (implied)	<i>you have gained your brother.]</i>
Unsuccessful outcome:	But if he refuses to listen even to the church,
Result:	Let him be to you (sg.) as a Gentile and a tax-collector. ¹

¹ Author’s literal translation. In the context, ἀδελφός clearly means any member of the congregation regardless of gender. The NRSV translates ἐλεγξον αὐτόν as “tell him his fault;” I have translated it “reprove him” in parallel with Lev 19:17 LXX for reasons made clear below. “Does not listen” in 18:16 translates μὴ ἀκούσῃ, whereas

TEXTUAL VARIANT

The question is whether Matthew wrote “If your (sg.) brother sins, go reprove him...” or “If your (sg.) brother sins against you (sg.), go reprove him...”

Luz recognizes the “important consequences” of the variant in 18:15 and finds it “regrettable that it must remain so uncertain.”² Luz’s regret and uncertainty arise, not from the external evidence, which is strong, but from transcriptional probability, which is ambiguous. The words εἰς σὲ are found in D L W Q 078 f¹³ 33 etc.³ and are missing from **ξ** B f¹ Or Cyr and other witnesses.⁴ Thus the majority of early witnesses favor their inclusion and, as Luz points out, “the longer text... is found in all text families.”⁵

Transcriptional probability becomes the deciding issue, and commentators find arguments on both sides. Nolland argues that the phrase was added to harmonize with 18:21, where Peter asks how many times he is required to forgive “my brother” who sins “against me.”⁶ On the other hand in the same sentence in 18:15 we read, “go reprove him between you (sg.) and him alone.” This part of the sentence is uncontested in the manuscripts, suggesting that the offense has been committed against one member of the community by another.⁷

The accidental omission of the phrase is easily explained either by homophony (the similarity in sound between the end of the verb: -ηση

“refuses to listen” in 18:17 (twice) translates παρακούση, which may be merely a stylistic variation or may have a slightly stronger negative emphasis (cf. W. D. Davies and D. C. Allison, Jr., *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel According to Saint Matthew* [2 vols.; ICC; Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1991], 2:785). Outline of Matt 18:15–17 derived, with alterations, from P. Thraillkill, “Tough and Tender,” (a sermon preached at Duncan Memorial United Methodist Church, Georgetown, S.C., 24 June 2007). Thanks to Charles Talbert for forwarding the outline and sermon to me.

² Ulrich Luz, *Matthew 8–20: A Commentary* (trans. Wilhelm C. Linss; Hermeneia; Minneapolis: Fortress, 2001), 448 n. 1.

³ John Nolland, *The Gospel of Matthew: A Commentary on the Greek Text* (NIGCT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005), 744.

⁴ Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2:782 n. 3.

⁵ Luz, *Matthew*, 448 n. 1.

⁶ Nolland, *Matthew*, 744; See also R. T. France, *Matthew: Evangelist & Teacher* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1989), 248–49.

⁷ Robert Gundry, *Matthew: A Commentary on His Handbook for a Mixed Church Under Persecution* (2nd ed.; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1994), 367; Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2:782 n. 3.

and the phrase εἰς σὲ⁸ or by assimilation to Luke 17:3.⁹ But the stronger likelihood is that a scribe deliberately omitted the phrase in order to make the passage apply to the discipline of any Christian, whether the offense was against a specific individual or not.¹⁰

Because the variant has been assigned a “C” rating by the committee of scholars working on the UBS critical text, the secondary literature tends to “go on limping with two different opinions” (1 Kgs 18:20 NRSV). Interpreters tend to regard the omission of εἰς σὲ as an appropriate expansion of the instructions, if not the original text. They may be correct. However, for the purposes of this essay the longer reading will be taken as original for the reasons specified above and I will attempt a strong reading of the passage based on that text.

SIMILAR TEXTS FROM THE MEDITERRANEAN ENVIRONMENT

Most of the comparisons between Matthew 18:15–17 and other Mediterranean literature have focused on documents from Qumran, particularly CD 9.2–8; CD 9.16–22; and 1QS 5.24–6.1.¹¹ At least CD 9.2–8 (perhaps all three passages) is an interpretation of Lev 19:17–18:

You shall not hate in your heart anyone of your kin; you shall reprove your neighbor, or you will incur guilt yourself. You shall not take vengeance or bear a grudge against any of your people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself: I am the LORD.

The Damascus Document expands on Leviticus to explain that to make a complaint public within the community without first dealing directly with the offender or to bring a complaint “in the heat of anger” shows

⁸ Bruce M. Metzger, *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament* (Stuttgart: UBS, 1971), 45; Craig Blomberg, *Matthew* (NAC 22: Nashville: Broadman, 1992), 278.

⁹ Luz, *Matthew*, 448 n. 1.

¹⁰ Metzger, *Textual Commentary*, 45; Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2:782 n. 3 refer to *Regula S. Benedicti* 23 in this regard and it is likely that the perceived need for just such a proof-text arose long before the sixth century CE.

¹¹ E.g., T. R. Carmody, “Matthew 18:15–17 in Relation to Three Texts from Qumran Literature (CD 9.2–8, 16–22; 1QS 5.25–6:1),” in *To Touch the Text: Biblical and Related Studies in Honor of Joseph A. Fitzmyer, S. J.* (ed. M. P. Horgan and P. J. Kobelski; New York: Crossroad, 1989), 141–58; D. Catchpole, “Reproof and Reconciliation in the Q Community: A Study of the Tradition-history of Mt 18,15–77.21–22/Lk 17,3–4,” *SNTSU* 8 (1983): 79–80; J. Gnllka, “Die Kirche des Matthäus und die gemeinde von Qumran,” *BZ* nf 7 (1963): 42–63.

that the accuser is a vengeful grudge-bearer. In a sentence reminiscent of Eph 4:26 the Damascus Document warns against keeping silent (i.e., not speaking directly to the offender) “from one day to the next,” thereby incurring guilt for nursing anger in one’s heart.¹² By contrast, the point of the confrontations in Matthew is neither to avoid sin on the part of the offended party nor to build a case by collecting witnesses against the accused; the sole aim is to repair the relationship: “if he listens to you, you have gained your brother.”¹³

According to Dennis Duling, “the kind of group (or groups) represented by the Dead Sea Scrolls, as well as that (those?...) represented by the Matthean writer, can be seen as associations” like other voluntary associations found throughout the Mediterranean world at the same time. Duling has also shown that such voluntary associations are best understood in terms of a category that he calls “fictive kin groups.”¹⁴

These groups took a variety of forms in ancient Mediterranean societies: “athletic clubs,” ethnic/cultural preservation groups, “trade guilds, professional associations, theater guilds of actors, dancers, and artists, philosophical schools and ‘cult associations.’”¹⁵ It is important to note, however, that religion was a factor in all of Mediterranean life; there were no distinctively “secular” organizations. In the large cities migrants from all over the Roman Empire participated in fictive kin groups to gain a sense of identity and belonging that they had lost by leaving home and extended family. Such groups had qualifications for membership and rules of conduct. They often included shared meals and ceremonial rituals, as well as a system of offices and roles to be distributed among the members, though such roles often ended up mimicking the hierarchical structure of the larger society.¹⁶

Like the Qumran covenanters, other fictive kin associations had various means of maintaining harmony and punishing misbehavior within

¹² Translations from CD 9 follow Carmody, “Matthew 18:15–17,” 142–43. Issues of possible dependence of Matt 18 on Qumran documents or practices are hotly debated and will not be discussed here. See Carmody for a careful comparison and contrast between the procedures outlined in the Scrolls and those specified in Matthew.

¹³ Carmody, “Matthew 18:15–17,” 152.

¹⁴ Dennis C. Duling, “Matthew 18:15–17: Conflict, Confrontation, and Conflict Resolution in a ‘Fictive Kin’ Association,” *BTB* 29 (1999): 4–22. See also the lengthier discussion by M. Weinfeld, *The Organizational Pattern and the Penal Code of the Qumran Sect: A Comparison with Guilds and Religious Associations of the Hellenistic-Roman Period* (NTOA 2; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1986).

¹⁵ Duling, “Conflict,” 8.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

the group. A group known as the Iobakchoi (Bakchic Society) had a procedure for settling disputes among members:

If anyone starts a quarrel, is found to be uncivil, takes someone else's place, insults or demeans another, the victim of such treatment shall present two Iobakchoi who shall under oath declare that they heard the insult or derision to which the plaintiff was subjected. The insolent party in such case is to pay to the Society a fine of 25 light drachmai.... Should a quarrel come to blows, the one who has been struck shall appeal in writing to the priest or vice-priest...and the Iobakchoi shall adjudicate the matter by vote. The guilty party shall be excluded from further meetings for whatever time determined by the body and shall pay a fine in an amount not to exceed 25 denarii. The victim shall pay the same amount if, instead of taking up the matter with the priest or the arch-Bakchos, he brings charges publicly.¹⁷

In this association, punishment for verbal abuse of another requires two witnesses to the insult and a charge of physical abuse must not be brought to the whole group without going through an official.

The practice of "reproving" (the Greek verb is ἐλέγχω) in LXX Leviticus and in Matt 18 functions in a way somewhat similar to that of "frank speech" (παρησία) in the philosophical schools. Failure to speak frankly in order to correct another's faults is seen as a symptom of indifference or false friendship.¹⁸ In his *On Frank Criticism*, the Epicurean Philodemus advises repeated critique, even when the one being criticized is obstinate (frgs. 63–65). A major difference between frank speech in the philosophers and reproof in Matt 18, however, is that frank speech is used to help another recognize personal faults rather than to resolve personal conflicts between members of a group.¹⁹

MATTHEW 18 AND THE COMPARATIVE LITERATURE

In the comparative literature the purpose of private reproof (when present) appears to be either to avoid shaming the accused or (and) to avoid a public scene and thus to prevent the accuser from sinning by

¹⁷ F. W. Danker, *Benefactor: Epigraphic Study of a Graeco-Roman and New Testament Semantic Field* (St. Louis: Clayton Publishing House, 1982), 159.

¹⁸ Epictetus, *Diatr.* 3.1.10–18; Plutarch, *Adul. amic.* 59.17.

¹⁹ Despite Duling's assertion in "Conflict," 13: "'Reproof' and 'frank speech' are honorable ways to resolve personal disputes within a group. They are ways to resolve conflict by direct personal confrontation." This may be so, but the examples appear to me to be primarily didactic.

glorying in the public shame of another member of the society or by seeking public shame as vengeance for the wrong done to the accuser. In Matt 18:15–17 the purpose of private confrontation “between him and you alone” is to “gain your brother” back into fellowship with the offended party.

The “one or two” witnesses in Matthew are usually taken as a reference to Deut 19:1:

A single witness shall not suffice to convict a person of any crime or wrongdoing in connection with any offense that may be committed. Only on the evidence of two or three witnesses shall a charge be sustained. (NRSV)

This reference appears twice more in the NT: 2 Cor 13:1–2 and 1 Tim 5:19–20. In these examples the witnesses are able to confirm the original offense by their testimony. This is also the function of the witnesses in the Bakchic Society inscription and in the Qumran documents. Only in Matthew do the witnesses witness the (second) confrontation between the offended party and the offender rather than the offense itself. Clearly they are to join in the attempt at conflict resolution. Thus, that which is to be established or confirmed by their witness is apparently the reconciliation of the relationship or, failing that, the recalcitrance of the offender.

In the regulations of fictive kin associations in the Mediterranean environment, the whole process of confrontation leads ultimately to a specified penalty if the fault is found to lie with the accused party. The Bakchic Society had a system of fines for various offenses.²⁰ In the Qumran literature there are penalties for breaches of Torah when the judicial process results in a conviction. We also find evidence for expulsion from fellowship in rabbinic literature.²¹ According to Duling, “Failure to conform results minimally in demotion in status, and beyond that, total expulsion from the group.”²² What about Matthew 18:17b? Does the offender’s refusal to listen to the assembly/church result in his

²⁰ In addition to fines paid by the offender, the injured party could be fined for not following the proper procedure; members could be fined for skipping a disciplinary vote; and even the sergeant-at-arms could be fined for failure to eject brawlers from a meeting. (Danker, *Benefactor*, 158–59).

²¹ See, e.g., G. Forkman, *The Limits of the Religious Community* (ConBNT 5; Lund: Gleerup, 1972).

²² Duling, “Conflict,” 16.

or her “excommunication” from the Matthean community?²³ A response to this question requires looking at both text and context.

“GENTILE AND TAX COLLECTOR” IN MATTHEW

In order to understand what it would mean for the recalcitrant Christian to “be to you as the Gentile and the tax collector,” it is necessary to survey the appearances of these terms in Matthew’s narrative and the appearances of characters who fit these two categories. This is the only place in the Gospel where the two categories are paired in the same sentence. The closest analogy occurs in the Sermon on the Mount at 5:46–47. The context is the command to love the enemy as God does, not merely to love “those who love them” as the tax collectors do, nor to “greet only group insiders (ἀδελφοί)” as the Gentiles do.

Elsewhere the author of Matthew pairs “tax collectors and sinners” (9:10–11; 11:19) or “tax collectors and prostitutes” (21:31–32). The only other appearance of Gentiles in the Sermon on the Mount is in 6:7–8, where they are said to “heap up empty phrases” when praying, and to “think that they are heard for their many words.” In the context of chapter six, the Gentiles are used as negative examples along with the “hypocrites,” who give alms “in the synagogues and on the streets” (6:2–4), pray “in the synagogues” (6:5–6), and make a point of displaying the fact that they are fasting (6:16–18), all in order to be “seen by others.” The chapter ends with the admonition to trust God

²³ The majority of commentators respond affirmatively: Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2:785; Luz, *Matthew*, 2:452; F. D. Bruner, *Matthew: A Commentary: Volume 2: The Churchbook: Matthew 13–28* (Dallas: Word, 1990), 648–50; D. A. Hagner, *Matthew 14–28* (WBC 33B; Dallas: Word, 1995), 532; F. W. Beare, *The Gospel according to Matthew: Translation, Introduction and Commentary* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1981), 380; E. Schweizer, *The Good News according to Matthew* (trans. D. E. Green: Atlanta: John Knox, 1975), 371; P. Luomanen, *Entering the Kingdom of Heaven* (WUNT 2/101; Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 1998), 248, 251–52; J. P. Meier, *Matthew* (Wilmington: Michael Glazier, 1980), 205–6; J. Andrew Overman, *Matthew’s Gospel and Formative Judaism: The Social World of the Matthean Community* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1990), 104; G. N. Stanton, “The Communities of Matthew,” *Int* 46 (1992): 384; M. White, “Crisis Management and Boundary Maintenance: The Social Location of the Matthean Community,” in *Social History of the Matthean Community* (ed. D. Balch; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1991), 224. In what is surely one of the most amazing comments in the secondary literature, D. A. Carson (“Matthew,” in *Matthew, Mark and Luke* [vol. 8 of F. Gaebelein, ed., *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1984)], 403) writes, “It is poor exegesis to . . . say that such people should be treated compassionately. The argument and the NT parallels (Rom 16:17; 2 Thess 3:14) show that Jesus has excommunication in mind.”

for the necessities of life, rather than to be like the Gentiles who “strive for all these things,” such as food, drink, and clothing. The Gentiles and tax collectors are characterized in the sermon as being self-serving and the Gentiles are further portrayed as attempting to impress their gods, from whom, nevertheless, they expect no provision for daily life, which is why they must “strive for” or “seek” those things for themselves (ταῦτα τὰ ἔθνη ἐπιζητοῦσιν).

Two of the references to Gentiles in Matthew’s Gospel are in quotations from Scripture. In 4:15, Jesus’ settling in Capernaum is seen as a fulfillment of the promise of Isa 9:1 that the shaming of “Galilee of the Gentiles” by Assyria will be replaced by glory. In 12:18–21, Jesus’ avoidance of conflict is taken as a fulfillment of the first servant song, which, in the Greek version Matthew cites, includes two references to Gentiles: The servant will announce judgment (κρίσις) and “in his name the Gentiles will hope” (ἔθνη ἐλπιούσιν).²⁴ In both these references to Isaiah, Jesus is seen as bringing positive benefit to Gentiles.

There are ten other references to Gentiles in the Gospel, some negative and some positive. In the Missions Discourse (10:18) Jesus predicts that his followers will be “dragged before governors and kings as a testimony to them and to the Gentiles.” Here and in the passion prediction of 10:19 and the warning against seeking status in 20:25, τὰ ἔθνη are pretty clearly the Roman authorities. Other negative uses of the term occur in 24:7 and 24:9 where they wage wars and “hate” Jesus’ followers. Here the term seems to participate both in the general sense of “nation or people” and in the more specific sense of “foreign people.”

But there are more positive references as well. In 10:5 the mission to the Gentiles is deferred, but in 28:19 a mission to πάντα τὰ ἔθνη is explicitly assigned to the disciples after the resurrection. In 25:32, the judgment of the Gentiles alluded to in the Isaiah citation of 12:18 is revealed to be based on how they treat the missionaries Jesus sends to them in 28:18–20.²⁵ In 24:14 the testimony to τὰ ἔθνη must be completed

²⁴ Actually, the loose translation, whether Matthew’s or that of a source, appears to have several functions in its context. See, e.g., D. Garland, *Reading Matthew: A Literary and Theological Commentary on the First Gospel* (New York: Crossroad, 1993), 138–39.

²⁵ I am reading Matthew 25:31–46 in agreement with Garland, *Reading Matthew*, 243–45, and Craig Keener, *A Commentary on the Gospel of Matthew* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999), 604–6. For a complete history of interpretation of this passage and detailed arguments for this reading, see Sherman W. Gray, *The Least of My Brothers: Matthew 25:31–46: A History of Interpretation* (SBLDS 114; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1989).

before the Parousia. In 21:43, Jesus predicts that the Kingdom of God will be “taken from” the chief priests and the elders and “given to ἔθνη that produces the fruit” of the kingdom.²⁶

In addition to Matt 5:46, where the love exhibited by tax collectors is said to include only friends, but not enemies, there are six other references to tax collectors. One, of course, occurs in the list of disciples at 10:3 where Matthew is explicitly labeled “Matthew the tax collector.” Matthew’s call in 9:9 is followed immediately by the picture of Jesus and his disciples reclining at table with “tax collectors and sinners” (9:10), to which Matthew’s “Pharisees” object in 9:11. The Matthean Jesus’ response in 9:12–13 identifies this table fellowship as “mercy” and ends with the punchline, “For I have come to call not the righteous, but sinners” (NRSV). In this way the narrator forces the choice upon the audience whether to identify themselves as sinners who are called to follow Jesus, or as righteous people who are not.²⁷

This portrayal of tax collectors as members of Jesus’ group is reinforced in 11:19 where the Matthean Jesus quotes his opponents as characterizing him as “a friend of tax collectors and sinners.” Finally, in 21:31–32 at the end of the parable of the two sons, Jesus compares the “tax collectors and prostitutes” to the rebellious but finally obedient son, whereas the “chief priests and elders” are compared with the superficially submissive but actually disobedient son. The “tax collectors and prostitutes” will “go ahead” of the religious leaders into the Kingdom of God because they “believed” John the Baptist whereas Jesus’ opponents did not. This passage is followed by the parable of the wicked tenants, after which the Matthean Jesus promises “the Kingdom of God” to ἔθνη who produce its fruit (21:43).

To sum up: The author of Matthew portrays tax collectors as people who, though initially resistant to God’s will, are valued by Jesus as table companions, who “believed” John’s message of repentance in preparation for Jesus’ coming. One of them is among Jesus’ closest followers. Gentiles in Matthew’s story are foreigners and outsiders, but in the genealogy of Jesus, three Gentile women appear (1:3, 5, 6).

²⁶ The singular dative noun is anarthrous, but cannot mean a specific ethnic group, which is why the NRSV translates it “a people.” The explicit contrast with the temple leadership reinforces the sense that the people that will produce the fruit of the Kingdom includes Gentiles.

²⁷ The author of Matthew’s Gospel does not add “to repentance” after “sinners,” as does the author of Luke.

Isaiah predicted great benefit to them as a result of the coming of the Messiah and Matthew portrays Gentiles as responding positively to Jesus (2:1–12; 8:5–13; 15:21–28). Gentiles are to be transformed into disciples (μαθητεύσατε—28:19) by the followers of Jesus. Some of these Gentiles will gain entrance into the Kingdom at the judgment because by responding with welcome and compassion to Jesus’ ἀδελφοί, they welcomed Jesus himself (10:40–42; 25:31–46; cf. 18:5). The worst that can be said then about “Gentiles and tax collectors” is that they are portrayed in Matthew as potential members of Jesus’ “fictive kinship association,” and that Jesus shares table fellowship with tax collectors, apparently without regard to whether or not they repent.

THE IMPACT OF THE LITERARY CONTEXT OF MATT 18:15–17

The question here has to do with which way the context pulls the interpretation.

It is possible to read Matt 18:17 as Luz does. He believes that the phrase “Gentiles and tax collectors” was in the tradition that Matthew received and that it reflects

a Jewish Christian community that still regarded itself as part of Israel and that had not yet embraced the gentile mission. For its members the terms “Gentiles and tax collectors” still refer to people with whom one did not associate.²⁸

Further, Luz thinks that 18:18 determines that the interpretation of 18:17b must be excommunication. For him, “binding” and “loosing” must refer to

every disciple who forgives or “retains” sins and to the church assembly. It grants the highest authority to its decisions. “Binding” and “loosing” refer here not to teaching or interpretation but rather to judicial decisions, and in the context they must have the meaning of “retaining” or “forgiving” sins.²⁹

²⁸ Luz, *Matthew*, 449.

²⁹ Luz, *Matthew*, 454, 452 n. 36. One is forced to wonder whether they “must” have these meanings because of John 20:23 or because of Matt 18:15–17. If the former, what justifies interpreting Matthew by means of John? If the latter, why is this not begging the question?

J. Galot, on the other hand, argues that the context pulls in the other direction.³⁰ He notes that the author of Matthew has consistently maintained the second person singular: “If *your* brother sins against *you*... go reprove... take along with *you*... tell the church... let him be to *you* as a Gentile and a tax-collector.” Thus, the passage is not about correcting a sinner but about reconciliation with one who has given offense. For Galot, “let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax-collector” should be paraphrased, “deal with him as you would deal with a Gentile and with a tax-collector.”³¹ The implication of this interpretation is that the offended Christian now realizes that the one that he previously thought was his “brother” is actually implacably hostile toward him and toward the community and must be won back. Since she does not behave like a member of the community, she becomes a person to be evangelized.³²

Following immediately after the parable of the lost sheep, 18:15–17 should be understood as an example of the extreme measures that must be taken to restore to the community one of the “little ones” who “strays.” Because God is focused on the “least” rather than on the “greatest,” the other ninety-nine are to be left to look after themselves while major efforts are expended on the Christian who has not yet learned how important it is not to “sin against” another member of the community. The statement to the church in 18:18, “I tell you solemnly that whatever you (now plural) bind on earth is bound in heaven and whatever you (pl.) loose on earth is loosed in heaven,” becomes, in this literary context, not a promise but a warning: “Be careful! How you behave toward the ‘little ones’ has consequences that you must not take lightly.” In this reading the promise to the community of answered

³⁰ J. Galot, “Qu’il soit pour toi comme le païen et le publicain,” *NRTh* 96 (1974): 1009–30.

³¹ Galot, “Qu’il soit pour toi comme le païen et le publicain,” 1012, 1024. See also W. G. Thomson, *Matthew’s Advice to a Divided Community: Mt. 17:22–18:35* (AnaBib 44; Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1970), 185. Thomson thinks that only the offended individual is being instructed to avoid associating with the recalcitrant member. To this, Davies and Allison comment, “But does it make sense to tell only one person to decline fellowship with another?” (*Matthew*, 2:785). They then quote J. P. Meier: “The discipline of ‘shunning’ a fellow Christian would not be effective unless all the other members agreed to implement the decision.” But again, these comments *presuppose* that the point is excommunication or “shunning.”

³² Some commentators who believe that the offender is to be excommunicated also emphasize re-evangelization, but in my view the argument for excommunication is both weak and unnecessary.

prayer in 18:19–20 provides hope that the evangelistic efforts toward the recalcitrant offender will be successful.

The third section of the discourse beginning with Peter’s inappropriate question about the limits of forgiveness and ending with the parable of the unforgiving servant is punctuated with the warning that interprets everything that has gone before: “So my heavenly Father will also do to every one of you if you do not forgive your brother or sister from your heart.”

To sum up: Assuming the longer reading in 18:15 provides a fresh reading of this passage, instead of reading the whole passage with a pre-conceived meaning assigned to 18:18. Given the longer reading, there is compelling reason to read the second-person singulars throughout 18:15–17 as evidence that the topic is conflict resolution between two church members and that, in the context of chapter eighteen as a whole, v. 17b refers not to a penalty but to a call for re-evangelization. And this is the case even without bringing in what some regard as a conflict with the parable of the wheat and the weeds in 13:24–30, 36–43.

CONCLUSION

Personal animosity, unresolved conflict, and grudge-bearing are serious problems within Christian communities—no less so now than in the first century. The author of Matthew takes conflict resolution between Christians so seriously that he addresses it not only in chapter eighteen, but also in the Sermon on the Mount in 5:23–24.

In Matt 18:15–17 the actions prescribed are the steps to be taken by the offended party. In 5:23–24 the actions are to be taken by the offender: “So when you are offering your gift at the altar, if you remember that your brother or sister has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar and go; first be reconciled to your brother or sister, and then come and offer your gift” (NRSV). Strictly speaking, the addressee in chapter five is not even necessarily guilty of offending another. A brother or sister could “have something against” another for illegitimate reasons or as a result of a simple misunderstanding. Wherever there is a broken relationship, for whatever reason, the author of Matthew places the burden of action on the Christian who is aware of the problem. That person may need to confront an offender in order to forgive, or to seek forgiveness from one who has been injured by him or her, whether intentionally or not. In fact, in Matt 5, intention

is subordinated to perception; the reason for one person's "having something against" another is beside the point.

Perhaps by requiring initiative from both the offended party and the purported offender, the Evangelist hopes to multiply the opportunities for reconciliation. Were these Matthean admonitions to be taken seriously in a congregation, the time now spent on political machinations and malicious gossip might be devoted to more positive pursuits.³³

³³ Research assistance for this article was provided by the graduate program of the Department of Religion at Baylor University. I would like to thank Daniel Chon and Peter Reynolds for their invaluable assistance with this project.

THE NOBLE AND GOOD HEART: Καλοκάγαθία IN LUKE'S PARABLE OF THE SOWER

John B. Weaver

Among the gospel accounts of the Parable of the Sower, Luke's narrative is unique in its description of a "noble and good heart" (καρδία καλὴ καὶ ἀγαθή) wherein the seeds of God's word are planted and grow (Luke 8:15). It is widely recognized in the commentary tradition that the phrase καλὸς καὶ ἀγαθός was a conventional expression used in Greco-Roman culture to designate those of high status, particularly high moral status.¹ Despite these passing references in commentaries on Luke, and the faint echo of the ancient *topos* in modern translations (e.g., "honest and good heart" in the KJV and "noble and good heart" in the NIV), investigation of the interpretive significance of this ancient

¹ This observation is standard and unelaborated in commentaries, e.g., François Bovon, *Luke 1: A Commentary on the Gospel of Luke 1:1–9:50* (Hermeneia; Minneapolis: Fortress, 2002), 311: "In order to make comprehensible the special character of Christian existence, Luke uses the Greek concept of ideal existence, καλοκάγαθία ('noble goodness')." Similarly, Hans Klein, *Das Lukasevangelium* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2006), 308; Luke Timothy Johnson, *The Gospel of Luke* (SP 3; Collegeville, Minn.: Liturgical, 1991), 133; Joseph Fitzmyer, *The Gospel according to Luke I–IX* (AB 28; Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1981), 714; Frederick Danker, *Jesus and the New Age* (St. Louis: Clayton, 1972), 177; Birger Gerhardsson, "The Parable of the Sower and Its Interpretation," *NTS* 14 (1968): 184; Jacques DuPont, "La Parole du Semeur," *Foi Vie* 66 (1967): 20; W. Grundmann, "καλός," *TDNT* 3:540–542. A noteworthy exception to this tradition of interpretation is the critique by I. Howard Marshall ("Tradition and Theology in Luke," *TynBul* 20 [1969]: 56–75), who finds it "doubtful" that Luke made use of this Hellenistic *topos*. Marshall supports his conclusion with the observation that the phrase καλὸς καὶ ἀγαθός had "already penetrated Hellenistic Judaism with no trace of its characteristic Classical Greek meaning" (73). As we shall see, however, Hellenistic authors like Philo and the writer of 4 Maccabees display awareness and adoption of Greek philosophical traditions regarding καλὸς καὶ ἀγαθός. In this light, Luke's description of the "noble and good heart" is in accord with Marshall's acknowledgment that "Luke has to some extent 'Hellenized' the Gospel tradition" (74). Modern recognition of this Hellenistic influence extends back to the annotations of Theodore Beza, who notes the similarity of Luke 8:15 to "a Hellenic way of speaking found in Greek philosophy and popular parlance." Beza also equates καλὸς καὶ ἀγαθός with the more common compound forms of the phrase, καλὸς κἀγαθός and καλοκάγαθός [Theodore Bèze, *THE KAINHΣ ΔΙΑΘΗΚΗΣ* (Basileae: Impensis Nicolai Barbirii & Thomae Courteau, 1560), 210].

tradition remains a *desideratum* in Lukan studies.² This essay undertakes to explore this topic, and is dedicated to my *Doktorvater* in celebration of his contributions to NT Studies, and in appreciation for his role in fostering my own academic study of Luke-Acts.

1. THE “NOBLE AND GOOD” IN ANTIQUITY

Previous studies of the phrase *καλὸς καὶ ἀγαθός* and its Greek cognates—*καλὸς κἀγαθός* and *καλοκἀγαθία*—have focused on the usage of these locutions in the literature of Classical Greece.³ The general consensus of these studies is that *καλὸς καὶ ἀγαθός* and its cognates originally signified the outstanding quality or “nobility” of two groups in ancient Greece: (1) individuals of aristocratic status, and (2) individuals of morally excellent character.⁴ Although the socio-political significance

² Satisfactory translation of *καλός* is often difficult, and especially so in the conventional phrase *καλὸς καὶ ἀγαθός*. The present study translates *καλός* as “noble.” The phrase *καλὸς καὶ ἀγαθός* and its crasis form (*καλὸς κἀγαθός*) are translated as “noble and good,” while the compound form (*καλοκἀγαθός*) is rendered as “noble” or “nobility.” All three forms of the *topos* might be translated as “noble,” but the present approach accommodates the traditional two-word English translation of *καλὸς καὶ ἀγαθός* in Luke 8. For support of this approach, see Aristotle, *Eudemian Ethics* (trans. Michael Woods; Oxford: Clarendon, 1992), 173. The alternate translation of the Greek phrase in the KJV and NRSV (“honest and good”) stands within a tradition extending back to Cicero, who translates *καλός* and *ἀγαθός* as *honestum* and *bonum*, respectively (e.g., *Fin.* 3.29). *Honestum* here does not primarily mean “free from deception,” but rather “morally excellent and praiseworthy.” The use of *honestum* for *καλός* is bypassed in the Latin Vulgate (“in corde bono et *optimo*”), but is revived in Erasmus’ 1516 Latin translation of the Greek NT (“in corde *honesto* & bono”). This revival of the classical Latin is adopted and defended by Theodore Beza, whose influence is seen in the “*honest* and good heart” of the Geneva Bible (1588) and King James Bible (1611).

³ M. Meier, “Kaloskagathia,” *New Pauly* 7:10–11; Félix Bourriot, *Kalos Kagathos—Kalokagathia: D’Un Terme de Propagande de sophistes à une notion sociale et philosophique* (2 vols; Hildesheim, N.Y.: Georg Olms, 1995); K. J. Dover, *Greek Popular Morality* (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1974), 41–45; Hermann Wankel, *Kalos kai Agathos* (Ph.D. diss., Julius-Maximilians Universität zu Würzburg, 1961; repr., New York: Arno, 1979); Walter Donlan, “The Origin of *Καλὸς κἀγαθός*,” *AJP* 94 (1973): 365–74; Julius Jüthner, “Kalokagathia,” *Charisteria: Alois Rzach zum Actzigsten Geburtstag* (Reichenberg: Verlag von Gebrüder Stiepel, 1930), 99–119. The equivalence of the phrases *καλὸς καὶ ἀγαθός*, *καλὸς κἀγαθός*, and *καλοκἀγαθία* is asserted by Douglas Cairns, “Kalokagathia,” *Classical Review* 47.1 (1997): 76, and is evidenced in numerous passages where the cognates are used interchangeably, e.g., Plato, *Gor.* 470E; Xenophon, *Mem.* 2.1.28; 3.9.4–5; *Oec.* 6.13–17.

⁴ See, for example, the assessment by Meier (“Kaloskagathia,” *New Pauly* 7:10–11): “*Kaloskagathia* became in the 4th cent. a social status symbol for rich, respected citizens, who supported the *polis* with demonstrative generosity. At the same time, under the influence of Socrates, *kalokagathia* also became an ethical category.” The twofold (social

persisted in antiquity, the latter tradition of “moral nobility” predominated in the Classical, Hellenistic, and Roman eras, largely due to the influence of Socratic literature, where phrases involving *καλός* and *ἀγαθός* first prominently appeared.⁵

According to his most famous biographers, Socrates was both the expounder and exemplar of *καλοκάγαθία*.⁶ According to Plato, Socrates was unique among the Athenian citizenship in his pursuit and teaching of true “nobility.” This is seen in Plato’s *Apology* (21A), where Socrates’ search for *καλὸς καὶ ἀγαθός* among the reputedly wise citizens of Athens was a cause of his execution. Elsewhere in the Platonic dialogues, *καλοκάγαθία* is the ultimate goal of Socratic instruction, characterizing the soul of the “true philosopher” and the “true guardian of the state.”⁷ Similarly, Xenophon presents a Socrates “who showed his companions that he was noble and good himself (*ἐαυτὸν καλὸν καὶ ἀγαθόν*),” and who taught his student how to possess nobility and to apply it in their behavior.⁸ These depictions of Socrates and his teachings participate in a conventional characterization of philosophy and the philosopher in the Socratic dialogues—a characterization of the “noble and good” pursuit of wisdom and virtue that recurs repeatedly in subsequent Greco-Roman and Hellenistic Jewish literature.

1.1. *The noble soul is good soil for instruction*

Central to the Socratic teachings about *καλὸς καὶ ἀγαθός* was the doctrine that the noble and good soul would grow the seeds and fruit

and ethical) significance of the term is also emphasized by Georg Bertram, “*καλός*,” *TDNT* 3:538–39. Much of the twentieth-century scholarship on *καλοκάγαθία* is focused on the historical origins of the socio-political designation in Classical Greece, with relatively little attention on the development of the ethical meaning in the Hellenistic and Roman eras. Both Bourriot (*Kalos Kagalos*) and Donlan (“The Origin of *Καλὸς καὶ ἀγαθός*”) argue for a fifth-century BCE origin, thus correcting earlier arguments (e.g., Wankel, *Kalos kai Agathos*) for Homeric origins. Other aspects of Bourriot’s “revisionist” approach are less persuasive, on which see the trenchant critique by Cairns, “*Kalokagathia*,” 74–76.

⁵ For examples of *καλὸς καὶ ἀγαθός* designating economic, social, and political statuses, see Plato, *Resp.* 569A.

⁶ Xenophon, *Mem.* 2.1.20; *Oec.* 7.43; *Mem.* 1.2.18; 2.1.29. On Xenophon’s portrayal of the moral nobility of Socrates and its competitive relationship with the portrayal of Socrates in Plato’s *Apology*, see Paul A. Vander Waerdt, “Socratic Justice and Self-Sufficiency: The Story of the Delphic Oracle in Xenophon’s *Apology of Socrates*,” *Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy* 11 (1993): 35–38.

⁷ Plato, *Resp.* 376C; cf. *Symp.* 204A; *Lach.* 192C; *Resp.* 396D.

⁸ Xenophon, *Mem.* 1.2.17–18; 1.5.1; 1.6.14; 2.1.20, 29; 3.10.5; *Oec.* 4.82; 7.43.

of philosophical instruction. The image of a garden planted with the words of the philosopher was a metaphor adopted by Plato and other ancient philosophers to depict this growth of wisdom in the noble and good soul.⁹ This metaphor is seen in Plato's *Phaedrus*, where the sower who plants shallow and short-lived instruction is contrasted with the sower whose teaching bears fruit in the καλὸς καὶ ἀγαθός:

Would a sensible sower (γεωργός), who has seeds which he cares for and which he wishes to bear fruit, plant them with serious purpose in the heat of summer in some garden of Adonis, and delight in seeing them appear in beauty in eight days, or would he do that sort of thing, when he did it at all, only in play and for amusement? Would he not, when he was in earnest, follow the rules of farming and plant his seeds in fitting ground, and be pleased when those which he had sowed reached their perfection in the eight month? And shall we suppose that he who has knowledge of the just and the noble and good (καλῶν καὶ ἀγαθῶν) has less sense about his seeds than the husbandman? . . . In my opinion, serious discourse about them is far nobler when one employs the dialectic method and plants and sows in a fitting soul intelligent words which are able to help themselves and him who planted them, which are not fruitless, but yield seed from which there spring up in other minds other words capable of continuing the process for ever, and which make their possessor happy, to the farthest possible limit of human happiness.¹⁰

Here the noble and good is suited to philosophical instruction due to active and productive reception of instruction. Similarly, in Plato's *Republic*, the noble and good nature is characterized by a quest for truth and drive for excellence:

Let us begin, then, what we have to say and hear by recalling the starting-point of our description of the nature (φύσιν) which the noble and good (καλὸν τε καὶ ἀγαθόν) must have from birth. The leader of the choir for him, if you recollect, was truth. He was to seek truth always and altogether on

⁹ Agricultural metaphors for philosophical and religious instruction were widespread in the ancient world, especially the commonplace comparison of the growth of wisdom and the growth of the seeds of plants. For the history of this tradition, see Maryanne Cline Horowitz, *Seeds of Virtue and Knowledge* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998). On the metaphor of the seed of the word, see passages listed by Hans-Josef Klauck, *Allegorie und Allegorese in synoptischen Gleichnistexten* (NTAbh n.s. 13; Münster: Aschendorff, 1978), 193–96; cf. Gottfried Quell and Siegfried Schulz, “σπέρμα, κτλ.,” *TDNT* 7:536–71.

¹⁰ Plato, *Phaedr.* 276B1–277A6. (Unless noted otherwise, quotations from Greek and Roman texts are taken from the Loeb Classical Library.) A motivating question in the context of this passage is the superiority of spoken instruction over written instruction.

pain of being an imposter without part or lot in true philosophy. . . . The nature which we assumed in the philosopher, if it receives the proper teaching, must needs grow and attain to consummate excellence, but, if it be sown and planted and grown in the wrong environment, the outcome will be quite the contrary, unless some god comes to the rescue.¹¹

Plato's account of noble receptivity to truth is echoed in Stoic tradition, where the "noble and good" bears the fruit of wise instruction. According to Seneca, for example, such a mind is conducive to the growth of the words of instruction (*Ep.* 38.2):

Words should be scattered like seed; no matter how small the seed may be, if it has once found favorable ground, it unfolds its strength and from an insignificant thing spreads to its greatest growth. . . . Few words are spoken, but if the mind has received them properly (*animus bene excepi*), they come into their strength and spring up. Yes, precepts and seeds have the same quality; they produce much, and yet they are slight things. Only, as I said, let a favorable mind receive and assimilate them. Then of itself the mind also will produce bounteously in its turn, giving back more than it has received.

Comparable metaphors are also attested in other ancient writers, like Philo of Alexandria, who combined Middle Platonic and Stoic teachings in his allegorizing interpretation of the Jewish Scriptures.¹² Philo repeatedly employs agricultural imagery to describe the fertile growth of the divine word in the "noble" disposition, for example, in the transferal of Torah from older men to a younger generation:

And when they see young men of good dispositions springing up like flourishing and vigorous shoots of a vine, they rejoice, thinking that they have found proper inheritors for this wealth of their souls with doctrines and good meditations, until they arrive at full strength and maturity, so as to bring forth the fruit of nobility (*καλοκάγαθίσκαλός*).¹³

It is important to acknowledge that Philo variously depicts this fertile encounter of nobility and divine wisdom. Nobility is sometimes portrayed as the precondition for proper reception of divine wisdom, for example, as the underlying soil in which lawful intentions and actions

¹¹ Plato, *Resp.* 490A, 492A.

¹² The eclectic nature of Philo's *logos* doctrine is highlighted in David Winston, *Logos and Mystical Theology in Philo of Alexandria* (Cincinnati: Hebrew Union College Press, 1985), 9–25.

¹³ Philo, *Spec.* 4.75; cf. *Praem.* 59–60; *Plant.* 142; *Conf.* 196; *Migr.* 24.

flourish.¹⁴ In other passages, “nobility” describes the initial growth, or the “seeds and shoots” (σπέρματα καὶ φυτά) of good intention and action that are cultivated by the Law.¹⁵ At other times, the initial instruction and the final product of implanted wisdom are together termed “noble and good.”¹⁶ The metaphor is variegated, but καλὸς καὶ ἀγαθός and its cognates frequently characterize the fertile reception of God’s wisdom, whether it occurs through reading of the Jewish scriptures, which promotes “growth in nobility” (εἰς καλοκάγαθίαν ἐπιιδιδόντων), or through the imitation of wise men’s nobility (σοφῶν ἀνδρῶν καλοκάγαθίας).¹⁷

Such agricultural metaphors in Philo and other ancient authors are a subset of a more widespread literary portrayal of καλὸς καὶ ἀγαθός and its pursuit of wisdom. Nature imagery aside, this noble receptiveness to philosophical instruction is depicted in the Socratic dialogues as an assiduous discipleship, for example, as the noble soul’s “love of learning,” “drive for truth,” “holding onto instruction,” and “steadfast and enduring listening.”¹⁸ The noble disposition to seek wisdom is similarly depicted in other classical authors. Isocrates, for example, advises his pupil Demonicus to “aspire to nobility of soul . . . and learn from the other wise men any useful lessons they have taught” (*Dem.* 51). Similarly, Xenophon describes καλοκάγαθία as the willingness of the noble soul to “open and explore the treasures that the wise men of old have left us in their writings.”¹⁹ Not surprisingly, the noble disposition for philosophical and divine instruction leads to a more extensive identification of καλὸς καὶ ἀγαθός with the philosophical life. Philosophy is “training in nobility and nothing else.”²⁰ It is “the field of study in which the noble and good man is trained”²¹

¹⁴ Philo, *Spec.* 1.246; *Sobr.* 65; *Legat.* 5; *Ios.* 124; *Ebr.* 112.

¹⁵ Philo, *Migr.* 24; *Plant.* 42; *Conf.* 149; *Prob.* 71.

¹⁶ Philo, *Spec.* 2.29; *Migr.* 219; *Somm.* 2.171; *Conf.* 196.

¹⁷ Philo, *Mos.* 2.215; *Prob.* 62; *Ios.* 19; *Virt.* 197.

¹⁸ Plato, *Resp.* 376C, 401E (love of learning); *Resp.* 490A (drive for truth); Xenophon, *Mem.* 2.1.28 (holding on word); Plato, *Lach.* 192C; Xenophon, *Mem.* 1.2.1 (endurance in listening).

¹⁹ Xenophon, *Mem.* 1.6.14; cf. *Mem.* 4.7.1, where the proper philosophical education provides one with knowledge befitting the “noble man” (ἀνδρὶ καλῷ κάγαθῷ).

²⁰ Musonius Rufus, frg. 4 (= Stobaeus, *Anth.* 2.31.123). English translation of Musonius is that of Cora E. Lutz, “Musonius Rufus ‘The Roman Socrates,’” *YCS* 10 (1947): 3–147. On Musonius’ Stoicism and his dependency on Plato and Xenophon’s “predilection for the word καλοκάγαθία,” see A. C. van Geytenbeek, *Musonius Rufus and Greek Diatribe* (Assen: van Gorcum, 1962), 161.

²¹ Epictetus, *Diatr.* 3.2.1; cf. 3.2.7.

As with philosophical instruction in Greco-Roman culture, καλὸς καὶ ἀγαθός was associated with philosophical and religious instruction in Hellenistic Judaism. Philo, for example, presents καλοκάγαθία as a quality of soul belonging to those who contemplate God (*Legat.* 5). Like the noble drive for truth and wisdom in Greco-Roman philosophical circles, nobility is a “hunger and thirst” and “zeal” for the word of God.²² Study of the divine oracles of the Jewish scriptures is the means by which God “trains people in nobility.”²³ According to both Philo and Josephus, the Essenes exemplified such nobility. For Philo, this nobility resided in the pious devotion of the Essenes, who “reverently desired to equip their minds.”²⁴ Josephus notes that καλοκάγαθία is conducive to miraculous insight: “[the Essenes] have been considered worthy to experience divine revelation on account of their nobility.”²⁵ Although different in details, these passages identify nobility as a disposition toward divine wisdom—a disposition that seeks to know the truth and the will of God.²⁶

1.2. *The good soul is noble through virtue*

Nobility of soul, with its receptivity to philosophical and religious instruction, was depicted as a seedbed for virtue in the ancient world. In Plato and Xenophon’s dialogues, for example, καλοκάγαθία is the nature (φύσις) or character (ἦθος) of soul in which all of the cardinal virtues flourish: “All forms of virtuous activity are noble and good; he who is noble and good will never choose anything else than virtue.”²⁷

²² Philo, *Fug.* 139; *Somm.* 1.49; 2.176.

²³ Philo, *Mos.* 2.189.3; 2.215.4.

²⁴ Philo, *Prob.* 75; cf. the “devoted contemplation” of the “noble” Therapeutae (Philo, *Contempl.* 90) and the Jewish martyr’s noble obedience of Law (4 Macc 15:9).

²⁵ Josephus, *A.J.* 15.379. This characterization of the Essenes is occasioned by the description of the Essene, Manaemus, “whose nobility (καλοκάγαθειαν) was attested in his whole conduct of life and especially in his having from God a foreknowledge of the future” (*A.J.* 15.373). Philo also exhibits this understanding in his account of Moses’ “nobility of soul,” which was demonstrated by Moses’ selection of a successor on the basis of “divine declarations” and not his own volition (*Virt.* 52, 63).

²⁶ This moral significance of καλοκάγαθία appears elsewhere in the literature of Hellenistic Judaism. In Tobit (5:14; 6:12; 7:6; 9:6), the ideal is a quality of both noble lineage and moral character. Similarly at 2 Macc 15:12, the phrase “noble and good” designates both the virtuous nature and upbringing of the High Priest Onias.

²⁷ Xenophon, *Mem.* 3.9.5. For references to the virtues in the noble soul, see the following passages: courage (Plato, *Resp.* 409A, 490A; Xenophon, *Mem.* 1.2.7); justice (*Mem.* 1.2.7; 3.9.5; *Symp.* 3.4); self-control (*Mem.* 1.5.1; 3.9.4); wisdom (*Mem.* 3.9.4; Plato,

This virtue of nobility, Xenophon (*Mem.* 4.8.11) concludes, was the ultimate goal of Socrates' teaching, who "exhorted men to follow virtue and nobility." The association of nobility with virtue is seen also in Isocrates, who presents the virtues, particularly piety and justice, as "engendered in the hearts of noble men" (*Panath.* 183). Similarly in Aristotle, it is the just, brave, and temperate man who is called "noble."²⁸ Also in Stoic tradition, "every noble and good man is complete because he is lacking in no virtue."²⁹ The Roman Stoic, Musonius Rufus, extends this tradition to portray seeds of virtue growing in human souls that are innately inclined to nobility (ὁποβολήν τῇ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ψυχῇ πρὸς καλοκἀγαθίαν).³⁰

In addition to its disposition for the virtues, nobility puts the virtues into practice. This is a theme of Xenophon, for whom "everything noble and good is done with virtue" (*Mem.* 3.9.4). The strenuousness of this noble life of virtue is repeatedly stated by Xenophon, who models its rigorous practice after the example of Socrates.³¹ Similarly, for Philo, correspondence of words and deeds characterizes the life of nobility (*Ios.* 230). The noble character is like a garden in which the virtues should be "tilled" and "exercised" (*Plant.* 42).

It is important to emphasize, however, that Xenophon, Philo, and other ancient authors do not simply define nobility as the performance of virtuous actions. The nobility of the virtuous action is contingent upon its purpose or "final cause." This is seen, for example, in Philo, who again utilizes agricultural metaphors to depict nobility and its practical virtue (*Spec.* 1.246):

Lach. 192C). Cf. Xenophon, *Mem.* 3.10.5 (καλά καὶ ἀγαθὰ ἦθη); and Plato, *Prot.* 315D (καλὸν τε καὶ ἀγαθὸν τὴν φύσιν).

²⁸ Aristotle, [*Mag. mor.*] 2.9.2; cf. *Eth. nic.* 1.8.13. On the importance of καλοκἀγαθία to Peripatetic ethics, see the first-century BCE doxography by Arius Didymus: "the virtue which is a synthesis of all the moral virtues is called καλοκἀγαθία" (Stobaeus 147.22). On this passage and its complex relationship to Aristotelian tradition, see Anthony Kenny, *The Aristotelian Ethics* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1978), 19–20.

²⁹ Arius Didymus, *Epit.* 11g (= *SVF* 3.54). The English translation is that of A. J. Pomeroy, ed., *Epitome of Stoic Ethics* (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 1999).

³⁰ Musonius Rufus, frg. 2 (= Stobaeus 2.9.8). The text is that of O. Hense, ed., *C. Musonii Rufi Reliquiae* (Leipzig: Teubner, 1905), 7–8. Musonius adds that the intensity of this inclination to virtue varies according to individual; on Musonius's doctrine of the "natural disposition for virtue," see van Geytenbeek, *Musonius's Rufus and Greek Diatribe*, 33–35.

³¹ Xenophon, *Mem.* 1.2.2; 1.2.18; 2.1.20, 28; 3.9.4–6; *Oec.* 7.43.

For as a deep and fertile soil, even if it at times yields a bad crop, still bears more and better fruit than one which is naturally unproductive, so in the same manner it happens that the barrenness of virtuous and God-fearing men is more full of nobility (καλοκάγαθίανκαλός) than the best actions which ordinary people perform by chance; for these men cannot intentionally endure to do anything blamable.

Here the “noble” is distinguished from the “ordinary” by moral intention: the inclination to do virtue, or the disinclination to do the blamable. The virtue of the noble and good individual is not “by chance” but a matter of moral end and purpose.

Ancient philosophers often explain this causal relationship of καλός, ἀγαθός, and ἀρετή through their definitions of the Greek terms. Aristotle, for example, defines the “noble and good” in teleological relation to virtue:

A person is noble and good (καλὸς καὶ ἀγαθός) because, among goods (τῶν ἀγαθῶν), those that are noble for themselves (τὰ καλὰ δι' αὐτά) belong to him, and because he practices noble (καλῶν) deeds, and for their own sake. Noble things are the virtues and the deeds resulting from virtue . . . so nobility is complete virtue (καλοκάγαθία ἀρετὴ τέλειος).³²

Two especially noteworthy features of this complex passage are: (1) the identification of “noble things” with virtue, and (2) the explanation that “the noble and good person” is the one who possesses and performs virtue for its own sake, that is, as a good-in-itself.³³ In this way, Aristotle identifies the noble and good individual by the goal or end of action, namely, the pursuit of virtue. This definition was part of a broader ethical discourse and debate about the nature of “the good” for humans, and the goal of this good in life, especially as it related to the pursuit of virtue.³⁴

Among the most significant voices in this debate were those of the Stoics, for whom the noble and the good were equivalent: “[the Stoics] say that only the noble is good” (μόνον τὸ καλὸν ἀγαθὸν εἶναι).³⁵ This

³² Aristotle, *Eth. eud.* 8.3 (1248b34–1249a16). On this passage, see further the commentary by Woods in Aristotle, *Eudemian Ethics*, 172–84.

³³ Throughout the eighth book of the *Eudemian Ethics*, Aristotle contrasts utilitarian pursuit of virtue for the sake of non-moral goods, and the *kaloi kagathoi* who pursue the natural goods (e.g., health and wealth) only for the sake of the virtuous actions for which they are useful. On this distinction, see Kenny, *Aristotelian Ethics*, 65, 206. Cf. Woods in Aristotle, *Eudemian Ethics*, 173.

³⁴ Cf. Cicero, *Fin.* 4.25; cf. 1.18; 3.8–9.

³⁵ Diogenes Laertius 7.101. Diogenes specifically attributes this doctrine to “Hecato

doctrine of the noble and the good appears repeatedly in Stoic texts, functioning as a short-hand expression for the belief that the goal of human life is pursuit of virtue. The relationship of this expression to the quality of the “noble and good” and the possession of virtue is elaborated by Arius Didymus in his first-century BCE doxography of Stoic ethics:

“the noble and good” (τὸ καλὸν καὶ ἀγαθόν) and “virtue and what participates in virtue” are equivalent. And every good (ἀγαθόν) thing is noble (καλόν), and likewise every shameful thing is bad. Because of this the Stoic goal (τέλος) is equivalent to life in accord with virtue.³⁶

As Arius’s summary indicates, Stoic doctrines about “the noble and the good” were ultimately concerned with the “goal” of human life and the highest “good” of a virtuous life.

The widespread influence of this Stoic formulation is evidenced in a number of Greek, Roman, and Jewish writings.³⁷ It is seen, for example, in Epictetus’ account of the ethical principle of the noble and good man: “the noble and good man does nothing for the sake of appearances, but only for the sake of acting nobly.”³⁸ The doctrine was also known to Philo, who explicitly attributes to the Stoics the idea that “only the noble is good.” According to Philo, the goodness of nobility explains the virtuous soul’s pursuit of divine wisdom as the highest good.³⁹ Here, as elsewhere, καλὸς καὶ ἀγαθός signals the high value of moral knowledge and the pursuit of moral virtue.

1.3. *The noble soul is not driven by bodily impulses*

The noble soul and its virtue were often contrasted to the pursuit of external goods and bodily pleasures. This contrast was observed earlier in the metaphors depicting the garden of the soul, wherein the noble and good is juxtaposed with transitory pleasures and aspirations. In

in his treatise *On Goods*, book iii., and Chrysippus in his work *On the Morally Beautiful*. They hold, that is, that virtue and whatever partakes of virtue consists in this: which is equivalent to saying that all that is good is beautiful, or that the term ‘good’ has equal force with the term ‘beautiful.’”

³⁶ Arius Didymus, *Epit.* 6e (= *SVF* 3.16); English translation from Pomeroy, *Epitome of Stoic Ethics*, 41.

³⁷ Cf. *SVF* 3.29–45.

³⁸ Epictetus, *Diatr.* 3.24.50.

³⁹ Philo, *Post.* 133; *Sobr.* 68; cf. *Sobr.* 60–61, where the Stoic formulation is expanded to include virtues of the mind, soul, and body.

these images, the desire for external riches and pleasures are opposed to pursuit of the higher and more refined goals of the virtuous life. In Xenophon, as in Plato, the noble soul is opposed to the vices of impiety, lust, sloth, avarice.⁴⁰ Socrates explicitly juxtaposes such concerns for bodily “pleasures” (ἡδοναί) to the life of “noble and good” deeds (Xenophon, *Mem.* 2.1.20). One motivating factor in this contrast is the Socratic polemic against the Sophists, whose avaricious “prostitution of wisdom” is explicitly opposed to noble (καλὸν καὶ ἀγαθόν) instruction motivated by friendship and duty.⁴¹

This same juxtaposition of the noble pursuit of virtue and the commonplace quests for wealth and pleasure is seen also in other Greek texts. According to Isocrates (*Dem.* 6), wealth and pleasure cultivate vice (κακία) and not nobility of soul (καλοκαγαθία). Similarly, in Aristotle, καλοκαγαθία is opposed to pursuit of pleasure and wealth as the ultimate goals of life.⁴² In stark contrast to these baser purposes, Aristotle concludes, the noble soul has as its final goal the contemplation of God (*Eth. eud.* 8.3.16–17).

In Stoic discourse, the noble soul is also explicitly opposed to pursuit of bodily pleasure. This opposition is inimical, with impulses and individuals attempting to supplant nobility. The following passage from Seneca depicts this hostility of the *hoi polloi* toward the noble-minded reception of the philosopher’s wisdom:

When a courageous word has been uttered in defiance of death or Fortune, we take delight in acting straightway upon that which we have heard. Men are impressed by such words and become what they are bidden to be, should but the impression abide in the mind, and should the populace, who discourage noble (*honesti*) things, not immediately lie in wait to rob them of this noble impulse; only a few can carry home the mental attitude with which they were inspired. It is easy to rouse a listener so that he will crave righteousness; for Nature has laid the foundations and planted the seeds of virtue in us all. And we are all born to these general privileges; hence, when the stimulus is added, the good spirit (*anima bona*) is stirred as if it were freed from bonds.⁴³

⁴⁰ For opposition to impiety, lust and sloth, see Xenophon, *Mem.* 1.2.2; against avarice, see *Mem.* 1.2.5; 2.6.23; cf. Plato, *Lach.* 186C.

⁴¹ Xenophon, *Mem.* 1.6.13. Cf. *Mem.* 1.2.7; Plato, *Lach.* 186C.

⁴² Aristotle, *Eth. eud.* 8.3.5–10; cf. [*Mag. mor.*] 2.9.1.

⁴³ Seneca, *Ep.* 108.7–8; cf. Philo, *Virt.* 10: “The praise of nobility has no currency among the unthinking masses.”

Here the crowd's opposition to virtue requires noble retention of the word of instruction. Philo exhibits a similar understanding of the challenges to the καλὸς καὶ ἀγαθός. The opposition for him is between those who pursue external goods and those whose primary purpose is to learn the truth of God's word and to live its virtue.⁴⁴ The "pupil of the sacred word" is indifferent to unnecessary wealth and pleasure, and considers the hardships of the virtuous life to be pleasant because he lives for the noble (πρὸς καλοκἀγαθίαν καλός).⁴⁵ The study of the sacred word is itself a defense against the possessions, pleasures, blows of fortune, and other influences that oppose virtuous indifference to bodily concerns and desires.⁴⁶

With a view to Luke 8, it is especially noteworthy that the noble soul's avoidance of unnecessary external pursuits is sometimes attributed to the virtue of "endurance."⁴⁷ The linkage of καλοκἀγαθία and endurance (ὑπομονή or καρτερίαν) is especially prominent in Philo and 4 Maccabees. Philo compares the soul's nobility to a type of soil that will not endure (ὑπομένουσι) bad crop (i.e., blamable action).⁴⁸ Conversely, the noble soul demonstrates endurance in maintaining virtue despite temptations, particularly desires of the body.⁴⁹ Philo identifies Enoch and Moses as examples of noble endurance; both men pursued and practiced virtue despite countervailing trials.⁵⁰

⁴⁴ Philo observes that καλοκἀγαθία is a rarity because of this opposition to material pursuits. Widespread and insatiable desire for "things we ought to neglect" leads to indifferent and inconstant regard for the "noble seeds" (τὰ καλοκἀγαθίασκαλὸς σπέρματα), which are then "like sparks that are snuffed out unless flamed within the human soul" (*Prob.* 71). Elsewhere (*Spec.* 1.304–305), nobility (καλοκἀγαθία) is crowded out of the human soul by the passions planted there by "a wicked husbandman."

⁴⁵ Philo, *Somn.* 1.124–125; cf. Philo, *Plant.* 170; *Migr.* 144.

⁴⁶ Philo, *Spec.* 2.46. Cf. *Ebr.* 112; *Fug.* 18; *Spec.* 4.75; *Prob.* 72, 76–77, 91; *Abr.* 23; *Mos.* 1.149; *Det.* 9. Philo repeatedly contrasts καλοκἀγαθία and ἡδονή; e.g., "it is natural for those who have this disposition of soul to look upon nothing as beautiful except what is good (μόνον τὸ καλὸν ἀγαθὸν εἶναι), which is the citadel erected by those who are experienced in this kind of warfare as a defense against the end of pleasure (ἡδονῆς)" (*Conf.* 145; cf. *Spec.* 2.48).

⁴⁷ E.g., Plato, *Lach.* 192C; *Resp.* 396D, 412C; Xenophon, *Mem.* 1.2.1; 2.1.20. According to Musonius Rufus, nobility requires endurance of hardships (*Discourse* 7 = Stobaeus, *Anth.* 3.29.75). On the conventional association of endurance and nobility (καλοκἀγαθία), see A. M. Festugière, "Υπομονή dans la tradition grecque," *RSR* 21 (1931): 477–486, esp. 479.

⁴⁸ Philo, *Spec.* 1.246. On noble endurance and mastery of the passions, see also *Sobr.* 65.

⁴⁹ Philo, *Somn.* 1.124–5; Philo, *Det.* 9; *Migr.* 144; *Fug.* 45; *Plant.* 170.

⁵⁰ On Enoch's noble endurance see Philo, *QG* 1.85. On Moses' "constant nobility," see Philo, *Virt.* 52.

In this same vein, 4 Maccabees describes “nobility” as a quality of thought or reason that combats and conquers bodily passion (4 Macc 3:18). Of special note is the association of nobility and endurance, which is seen first in the text’s panegyric introduction of the Jewish martyrs (4 Macc 1:10–11 NRSV):

On this anniversary it is fitting for me to praise for their virtues those who, with their mother, died for the sake of nobility (καλοκἀγαθίας), but I would also call them blessed for the honor in which they are held. All people, even their torturers, marveled at their courage and endurance (ὑπομονή), and they became the cause of the downfall of tyranny over their nation. By their endurance (ὑπομονή) they conquered the tyrant, and thus their native land was purified through them.

This noble endurance of external trials is of thematic importance in 4 Maccabees, exhibiting the Jewish martyrs’ capacity to remain faithful and obedient to God, despite torture and other persecution.⁵¹ Common to all of these depictions is the noble soul’s staid focus and hold on the divine law, for example, in 4 Macc 11:27: “it is not the guards of the tyrant, but those of the divine law that are set over us; therefore, unconquered, we hold fast to reason.” These are qualities of persistently pursuing the truth and holding onto virtue that are comparable to the other examples of καλοκἀγαθία seen above.

In a variety of ancient literatures we have observed similar dispositions and actions attributed to the “noble and good.” In its love of wisdom, practice of moral excellence, and endurance of trials, the “noble and good” represented some of the highest philosophical and religious ideals of the ancient world. More than idealistic principles, however, we have seen that the discourse of καλοκἀγαθία included specific examples of individuals who were καλὸς καὶ ἀγαθός. The principled and practical nature of ancient nobility is succinctly expressed by Epictetus:

The noble and good man (ὁ καλὸς καὶ ἀγαθός), bearing in mind who he is, and whence he has come, and by whom he was created, centers his attention on this and this only: how he may fill his place in an orderly fashion, and with due obedience to God. “Is it your will, O God, that I should still remain? . . . Whatever station or post you assign, I will die ten thousand deaths before I abandon it, as Socrates says.”⁵²

⁵¹ 4 Macc 11:22; 13:25–37; 15:9–10; cf. 4:1.

⁵² Epictetus, *Diatr.* 3.24.95; cf. 4.4.2; 4.8.22–28; Plato, *Apol.* 28D–29A.

In this way, ancient figures from Socrates to the Maccabean martyrs were identified as *καλὸς καὶ ἀγαθός* due to their extraordinary virtue, especially as evidenced through their attention and adherence to the divine *λόγος*.

2. THE NOBLE AND GOOD HEART IN LUKE 8

As was observed at the outset of this essay, Luke's account of the Parable of the Sower (Luke 8:4–15) is unique in its mention of the “noble and good heart” (8:15).⁵³ The preceding analysis has demonstrated that this conventional description of “nobility” was an ancient cultural symbol for the active pursuit and perpetuation of wise teaching and the divine *λόγος*. As we shall see, a similar response to the divine *λόγος* characterizes the noble and good heart in Luke 8. This correspondance to ancient discourses of *καλοκάγαθία* is discernable at multiple points in the Lukan narrative, illuminating interpretation of the parable and of Luke's broader representation of Christian discipleship.

Luke's participation in the ancient discourse of *καλοκάγαθία* is evidenced by a number of narrative features in Luke 8. First, the conformity to the ancient *topos* is evidenced by the altering and reordering of the two adjectives used to describe the good soil in Luke 8. Luke is the only one of the Synoptic Gospels to use two different adjectives to describe the “good” soil—*ἀγαθός* and *καλός*—and so differs from the descriptions in Matthew and Mark, where the final soil is described as *τὴν γῆν τὴν καλὴν*. In Jesus' initial telling of the parable at Luke 8:8,

⁵³ Previous analyses of Luke's Parable of the Sower, and particularly the interpretation of the parable in vv. 11–15, have emphasized both the variations from Matthew and Mark's accounts of the parable, and the correspondence of these variations to Lukan themes and theology as seen elsewhere in Luke-Acts (e.g., “the delay of the Parousia”). As a result, commentators have tended to assert the derivative and secondary quality of the parable's interpretation in Luke 8:11–15 and parallel passages. See, for example, the comments of Joachim Jeremias: “we must conclude, then, that the interpretation of the parable of the Sower is a product of the primitive Church which regarded the parable as an allegory, and interpreted each detail in it allegorically” (*The Parables of Jesus* [trans. S. H. Hooke; New York: Scribner, 1963], 79). Similarly, Adolf Jülicher, *Die Gleichnisreden Jesu* (2 vols.; Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 1910), 2:514–538; and C. H. Dodd, *The Parables of the Kingdom* (New York: Scribner, 1961), 145. Arguments for Luke's theologically motivated redaction of the parable have centered on the addition of the word “endurance” (*ὑπομονή*) to the qualities of the noble and good heart; e.g., Hans Conzelmann, *The Theology of St. Luke* (trans. Geoffrey Buswell; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1961), 104: “What matters now is *ὑπομονή* (v. 15), in other words, adjustment to a long period of persecution.”

the fertile soil is “good” (εἰς τὴν γῆν τὴν ἀγαθὴν); in the interpretation of the parable (v. 15), the soil is “fine” or “noble” (τὸ δὲ ἐν τῇ καλῇ γῇ). Within the narrative progression of the parable, this change in adjectives has the effect of identifying the “good (ἀγαθός) soil” (v. 8) as the “noble (καλός) soil” (v. 15). The narrative development concludes in v. 15 with the introduction and description of the “noble and good” heart (ἐν καρδίᾳ καλῇ καὶ ἀγαθῇ). In this final formulation, the adjectives ἀγαθός and καλός are placed together, but appear in reverse order from their subsequent appearances in the parable. As the preceding analysis of ancient literature suggests, this final reversal and combination of ἀγαθός and καλός is a point of convergence between Luke’s text and Luke’s literary horizon.

Luke shares with his literary horizon the use of the phrase καλός καὶ ἀγαθός to describe the virtuous disposition towards divine instruction.⁵⁴ This description is part of a broader Lukan ethic for hearing God’s word that is evident elsewhere in the parable and its narrative context.⁵⁵ As François Bovon has observed regarding the Parable of

⁵⁴ The productivity of the good soil is not explained in Matthew or Mark, nor is the good heart of the hearer mentioned. Instead, greater emphasis is placed on the varying levels of the seeds’ productivity: “yielding thirty-fold, sixty-fold, and a hundred-fold.” To be sure, Luke describes the final product of the seeds’ growth, but is focused on the process of the seeds’ “growth” (φύω) in the hearer. Also, the parable in Matthew and Mark (unlike Luke) is centered on the question of the meaning and significance of Jesus’ speaking in parables: “Why do you speak to them in parables?” (Matt 13:10; cf. Mark 4:10–11, 13). In Matthew, an additional layer of complexity is added by an extended quotation from Isa 6:9–10 (“You shall indeed hear, but never understand. . .”). The Isaiah quotation and allusions are also present in Mark to a greater extent than in Luke (e.g., “how will you *understand* all the parables,” Mark 4:13). The question of Jesus’ parables and the quotation of Isaiah, therefore, are subtexts that significantly affect the telling and interpretation of the parable in Matthew and Mark; both subtexts render the parable a statement about the reception of Jesus’ parables among his followers, and direct the nature of this reception along the lines described in Isaiah. Therefore, unlike the parallel accounts in the other Synoptic Gospels, Luke’s version of the parable constitutes a relatively straightforward narrative about the reception of God’s word in different types of human hearts, muting Matthew’s and Mark’s concerns for: (1) the significance of Jesus’ parabolic discourse, (2) Isaiah’s prophecy, and (3) the seeds’ varying levels of productivity.

⁵⁵ In Luke 8:12, for example, “believing” is uniquely mentioned by Luke as the disposition to be cultivated in the heart. Luke further reveals that the *telos* of God’s planting and the seed’s growth is the salvation of the hearer (8:12). Luke also emphasizes that this process of cultivation takes time. The seed on the stone, for example, is “believed *for a time*” (πρὸς καιρὸν); the seed is choked out among the thorns as the hearers “go on their way” (πορευόμενοι). These markers of time lead to Luke’s unique mention of the seed’s inability to “grow to maturity” (τελεσφοροῦσιν, Luke 8:14). The time allowed for the process of hearing the word is lengthened with each successive

the Sower, “what concerns Luke is the *how* of hearing, and no longer the *what*, as in Mark.”⁵⁶

Second, as in the ancient discourse of *καλοκάγαθία*, the noble and good heart in Luke 8 “holds fast” (*κατέχω*) to God’s word. In contrast to the narration of the good soil in Matthew and Mark, where the word is received with intellectual comprehension (*συνίημι*, Matt 13:23; cf. Mark 4:13), Luke’s narration focuses on the disposition of the hearer toward the word:

τὸ δὲ ἐν τῇ καλῇ γῇ οὗτοί εἰσιν οἵτινες ἐν καρδίᾳ καλῇ καὶ ἀγαθῇ ἀκούσαντες τὸν λόγον κατέχουσιν καὶ καρποφοροῦσιν ἐν ὑπομονῇ. (Luke 8:15)

Fruitful hearing of the word is here related to retention of the word, which in the parable’s immediate narrative context can be understood as a reference to the disciple’s persistent learning about, belief in, or obedience to the word. In Luke 8, Jesus twice rewards or praises the persistent discipleship of his followers: those who inquire into the meaning of his parable (vv. 9–10), and those “who hear the word of God and do it” (v. 21).⁵⁷ By contrast, the word is removed from hearers under the hold of the devil (v. 12). The parable and its narrative context thus characterize disciples according their tenacious pursuit and performance of the divine teaching. This usage of *κατέχω* to characterize the disposition of the *λόγος* in the disciple is comparable to the usage of the term in the Pauline letters, where it consistently designates faithful remembrance and observance of Christian tradition.⁵⁸

The noble heart’s hold on the word in Luke 8 also recalls ancient descriptions of the persistent pursuit and preservation of philosophical and religious teachings by the *καλὸς καὶ ἀγαθός*. As was seen from Socrates to Seneca, the noble soul’s reception of the word was characterized by the retention and transmission of the wise *λόγος*. This noble

soil, so that the ethical implications of the parable become clearest by the final two soils (cf. Bovon, *Luke 1*, 310).

⁵⁶ Bovon, *Luke 1*, 307.

⁵⁷ Unlike Matthew’s and Mark’s accounts, where Jesus’ explanation of the Parable of the Sower results from a generic inquiry about the reason for Jesus’ parabolic discourse, Luke casts this question into a specific inquiry about the meaning of the individual parable (Matt 13:10; Mark 4:10; Luke 8:9). The disciples’ question about the nature of the parable distinguishes them from those hearers who do not inquire about the parable, with the result that this latter group “hears, but does not understand.”

⁵⁸ 1 Cor 11:2; 15:2; 1 Thess 5:21; cf. Heb 3:6, 14; 10:23; Philo, *Som.* 2.56. Similarly, the term designates memory of divine message or tradition at Josephus, *A. J.* 2.75.

impulse to preserve philosophical or sacred teaching was necessitated by the opposition of the mob, the tyrant, worldly passions, or other ignoble forces. Viewed within this ancient literary context, the “holding fast” of the λόγος in Luke 8 is a virtuous adherence to sacred instruction and tradition that was itself a traditional characteristic of the “noble and good” heart in the ancient world.

Third, and closely related to the “holding fast” of the word, is Luke’s concluding description of the “endurance” (ὑπομονή) of the good and honest heart. The noble heart’s endurance in Luke 8 is comparable to the courageous disposition to stand firm (ὑπομένω) seen in other ancient accounts of the καλὸς καὶ ἀγαθός. Similar to the Stoic ideal of ὑπομονή, and the accounts of noble endurance in Philo and 4 Maccabees, the noble and good heart exhibits ὑπομονή (literally: it stays in the same position) with the word of God.⁵⁹ Like the endurance of Socrates and the Jewish martyrs, who persevered through maltreatment in their service to the sacred word, the ὑπομονή described in Luke 8 is the disposition to persist in belief and obedience to the word of God, despite persecution. Such faithful perseverance during persecution is clearly denoted by the other use of the term ὑπομονή in Luke-Acts:

You will be betrayed even by parents and brothers, by relatives and friends; and they will put some of you to death. You will be hated by all because of my name. But not a hair of your head will perish. By your endurance (ἐν τῇ ὑπομονῇ ὑμῶν) you will gain your souls. (Luke 21:16–19)

However, as Lucien Cerfaux has rightly observed, the meaning of ὑπομονή in Luke 8 involves more than faithful constancy during extraordinary persecution.⁶⁰ The noble heart’s endurance in Luke 8 is also a

⁵⁹ On the Stoic notions of ὑπομονή, see especially Michel Spanneut, “Le Stoïcisme dans l’histoire de la patience Chrétienne,” *MScRel* 39 (1982): 101–30. The anthropocentric nature of endurance in the parable (without explicit reference to divine initiative) has troubled some interpreters, e.g., John Nolland, *Luke 1–9:20* (Dallas: Word, 1989), 387. In addition to the passages cited earlier in this study, see Themistocles Adamopoulos, *Endurance, Greek and Early Christian: The Moral Transformation of the Greek Idea of Endurance, from the Homeric Battlefield to the Apostle Paul* (Ph.D. diss., Brown University, 1996); Cees Haas, “Job’s Perseverance in the Testament of Job,” in *Studies on the Testament of Job* (ed. M. A. Knibb and P. W. van der Horst; SNTSMS 66; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 117–154; A. M. Festugière, “Υπομονή dans la tradition grecque,” 477–86; C. Spicq, “Υπομονή, Patientia,” *RSPT* 19 (1930): 95–106.

⁶⁰ Lucien Cerfaux, “Fructifiez en supportant (l’épreuve), à propos de Luc 8,15” *RB* 64 (1957): 481–91. Cerfaux argues that Luke introduces the term ὑπομονή in correlation to the “trial” (πειρασμός) that causes those “on the rock” to fall away (Luke 8:13). He concludes that “ὑπομονή consists of the perseverance in the Christian life to endure

faithful constancy during the *everyday trials* (πειρασμός, Luke 8:13) of the Christian life—a perseverance during the temptations from body and society to betray belief. Expressed in Lukan terms, ὑπομονή is the courage to “take up the cross daily” (Luke 9:23).⁶¹

A fourth similarity between Luke’s parable and the cultural convention of καλοκάγαθία is the contrast between: (1) the noble and good heart, and (2) those “among the thorns” who hear and are choked “by the cares and riches and pleasures of life” (ὑπὸ μεριμνῶν καὶ πλούτου καὶ ἡδονῶν τοῦ βίου, Luke 8:14). Luke’s threefold description of this thorny soil is the most formulaic in the Synoptics, and is the only to mention the asphyxiating power of the “pleasures of life.” Unlike Matthew’s and Mark’s accounts of the thorny soil, where the word is choked by the “cares of this age and the deceitfulness of riches” (Mark 4:19; Matt 13:22), and where the emphasis falls on the turpitude of human desires (ἐπιθυμίας, Mark 4:19), Luke’s account of the thorny soil focuses not on the sinfulness of wealth and human passions, but rather on the constraining force of “life” (τοῦ βίου), with its material pressures, pursuits, and pleasures.⁶² As in the discourse about καλοκάγαθία seen in other ancient authors, Luke’s narrative highlights the external hindrances to knowledge and virtue, especially the diversions of wealth (πλοῦτος) and pleasure (ἡδονή). The appearance of ἡδονή in Luke 8 (attested only here in the gospels) is especially noteworthy since ancient literature repeatedly identifies ἡδονή as an obstacle to the καλὸς καὶ ἀγαθός. Seen in this light, the this-worldly concern for riches and pleasures that chokes out the word and the hearer in the thorny soil (Luke 8:14) is recognizable as a conventional foil to the noble heart’s reception of God’s work in Luke 8:15.

the πειρασμός” (485). In support of his conclusion, Cerfaux points out that (1) Luke’s version of the parable omits the eschatological terms θλῖψις and διωγμός, which are used in Mark’s and Matthew’s versions of the parable (Matt 13:21; Mark 4:17), and (2) the non-eschatological, “quotidian” meaning of πειρασμός is seen elsewhere in Luke-Acts. Within the context of Luke-Acts, this non-eschatological endurance is seen in Jesus’ constancy during his trial (πειρασμόν) in the wilderness (Luke 4:13), in the apostles’ persistent presence with Jesus during the trials (πειρασμοῖς) of his life (Luke 22:28), and also in Paul’s consistent witness despite the trials (πειρασμῶν) of Jewish opposition (Acts 20:19).

⁶¹ As Cerfaux observes (“Fructifiez,” 489), the addition of the adverb “daily” (καθ’ ἡμέραν) is unique to Luke’s account of this logion.

⁶² The Greek term at Luke 8:14 for “this life” (βίος) is used five times in Luke (and only once in the other gospels). In each of the other instances, the term refers to one’s livelihood or property (Luke 8:43; 15:12, 30; 21:4).

The interpretive significance of these insights extends to our (re)reading of the parable as a whole. The traditional tension between *καλο-καγαθία* and *ἡδονή* in ancient literature functions as a cultural marker of the narrative contrast between the final two soils in the parable. This literary contrast between the “thorny” and “noble” soils is, in turn, indicative of a broader set of narrative antinomies in the parable involving the seeds sown “along the path” and “on the rock” (Luke 8:12–13). Every phrase in the concluding description of the noble soil (8:15) corresponds and contrasts to the preceding descriptions of the three other types of ground and heart:

Type of Ground		Character of Heart	
On the Path	Word Removed		
On the Rock		Falls Away under Trial	
Among the Thorns			Choked by Pleasures
In the Noble Soil	Holds onto Word	Endures	Noble and Good

In this way, the “noble and good heart” functions as a foil to the three preceding characters in the parable.⁶³ The distinctiveness of the final soil that “bears fruit” is obvious upon even a cursory reading. But knowledge of the cultural significance of the phrase *καλὸς καὶ ἀγαθός* highlights the specific causes of this distinctiveness that are subtly signaled in the Lukan narrative. The noble and good heart’s enduring hold on the divine word is traditionally opposed to the influences in life (e.g., adversaries and other trials) that would obviate the goals of divine teaching, namely, belief and salvation—hence the contrast between the good soil and the seeds that falls on the path and the rock. Similarly, the Lukan narrative displays the conventional contrast between the pursuit of pleasure (the thorny ground) and the “noble and good heart,” which pursues God’s word as the highest good. This set of narrative relationships is evidence of both the central importance of the noble

⁶³ This contrast among the four dispositions toward the word is presaged in Luke 8:11 at the start of the parable’s interpretation, where Jesus states that the parable is about the “word of God” and “those who have heard.”

and good heart in the parable, as well as Luke's participation in ancient discourses about the noble discipline of divine wisdom.

3. CONCLUSIONS

Like the English word "noble" in contemporary parlance, the ancient phrase *καλὸς καὶ ἀγαθός* (and cognates) signaled different types of honorable status. Across these different situations, "noble and good" was a persistent symbol for Greco-Roman ideals, especially philosophical pursuit of wisdom and religious adherence to divine revelation. We have observed how this symbolism was developed within ancient theories of ethics, with the *καλὸς καὶ ἀγαθός* depicted in association with the moral virtues and in opposition to contrary dispositions. We have also traced the appearance of these ancient conventions in the descriptions of national heroes and religious principles in the literature of Hellenistic Judaism.

Viewed against this backdrop, Luke 8 is seen to share in the ancient belief that God's word is best received and grown in the character that virtuously pursues the divine wisdom as the highest good. This ancient doctrine of the *καλὸς καὶ ἀγαθός* is conventionally depicted in Luke's Gospel through the imagery of the seed's germination and fructification in soil. Although not necessarily intended for this effect, the parable's conventional portrayal of the noble and good heart would likely have promoted a positive impression of Christian discipleship among ancient audiences, especially among those for whom *καλοκάγαθία* symbolized a virtuous life leading to ultimate happiness. This "ideal reader" of the Gospel would have recognized the parable's time-honored contrast between honorable and dishonorable dispositions towards sacred teaching. This ancient ear was especially attuned to the dissonance of noble discipleship and worldly pleasures in the parable (8:14–15), as well as the harmony of noble discipleship and persistent inquiry (8:9) and obedience (8:21). In sum, an ancient audience would likely have recognized the language of *καλοκάγαθία* as a traditional discourse about knowledge, virtue, and the ethics of discipleship.

We have also observed the thematic emphasis on the perdurance of the *λόγος* in discourse about *καλοκάγαθία*. The phrase *καλὸς καὶ ἀγαθός* was seen to symbolize the pursuit and preservation of various philosophical and religious traditions in the ancient world. From Plato to Philo, the phrase was employed by authors to flatter and empower

the learning and transmission of received knowledge, whether it was the Socratic teachings, or the Stoic therapy for life, or religious prescriptions based on the Jewish Scriptures. Similarly, in Luke 8, the noble and good heart conserves the divine word, whereas the other hearts in the parable are unable to maintain it. This disciplined conservation of tradition resonates with many of the distinctive features of Luke's parable and broader narrative. From the Gospel's introductory emphasis on the narratives of things "handed down" (Luke 1:2), to the devotion to the apostles' teaching in Acts of the Apostles (e.g., Acts 2:42), the Lukan narrative repeatedly presents disciples acting to preserve the sacred teachings and to persist in service to this word over time.⁶⁴ Similarly, in its narration of Jesus' challenge to his disciples' grasp of "the word," Luke's account of the noble and good heart maintains traditions about the master teacher through participation in ancient traditions about the virtuous disciple.

⁶⁴ The Lukan ethic of perseverance is analyzed by Schuyler Brown, *Apostasy and Perseverance in the Theology of Luke* (Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1969).

THE “WORD OF GOD” AND RETRIBUTION THEOLOGY IN LUKE-ACTS

Scott Shauf

It is widely accepted that Luke wrote his two-volume work to be a continuation of biblical history.¹ Two of the many features that link Luke-Acts with OT historiography are his use of the phrase “the word of God/the Lord” as a part of his depiction of the ministry of Jesus and the Christian movement and the idea that divine retribution plays a role in the flow of historical events. These themes are connected via their relationship to the prophetic character of OT historiography and of Luke-Acts. The main point to be explored here is how these themes get reconfigured in Luke’s work, especially in Acts. This reconfiguring, I will argue, is primarily due to the changed place of the people of Israel in Luke-Acts vis-à-vis the OT narratives and to the emphasis on the eschatological nature of God’s retributive action in Luke-Acts.

DIVINE RETRIBUTION AND THE DIVINE WORD IN THE OT

The centrality of divine action in OT historiography is obvious even to the most casual reader. As Millar Burrows writes:

The basic, distinctive presupposition of all ancient Hebrew ideas about history is the conviction that in human history the one eternal, living God is working out his own sovereign purpose for the good of his creatures, first for his chosen people, and through them for the rest of mankind.²

¹ E.g., Nils Alstrup Dahl, “The Story of Abraham in Luke-Acts,” in *Jesus in the Memory of the Early Church* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1976), 66–86; H. Douglas Buckwalter, “Luke as Writer of Sacred History,” *Ezr* 14 (1996): 86–99; Luke Timothy Johnson, *The Gospel of Luke* (SP 3; Collegeville, Minn.: Liturgical, 1991), 10; Brian S. Rosner, “Acts and Biblical History,” in *The Book of Acts in Its Ancient Literary Setting* (ed. Bruce W. Winter and Andrew D. Clarke; vol. 1 of *The Book of Acts in Its First Century Setting*, ed. Bruce W. Winter; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993), 65–82; Gregory E. Sterling, *Historiography and Self-definition: Josephus, Luke-Acts, and Apologetic Historiography* (NovTSup 64; Leiden: Brill, 1992), 363.

² Millar Burrows, “Ancient Israel,” in *The Idea of History in the Ancient Near East* (ed. Robert C. Dentan; New Haven: Yale University Press, 1955), 128. For many references covering this topic see Bertil Albrektson, *History and the Gods: An Essay on the*

It is also easy to recognize that throughout the OT, as well as in other Jewish historiographical works like 1 and 2 Maccabees, this working out of God's purpose among humankind takes the form of retribution, reward for obedience to God, and punishment for disobedience. This principle is spelled out in places like Judg 2:11–23 and 2 Kgs 17:7–23, so that it is clear that Israel's fortunes as a nation rise and fall in accordance with the people's submission to God's commands. Even where it is not spelled out, the plot generally makes it clear that the principle is operative. The skepticism of Qohelet never seems to make its way into the historiographical works.

The key role of prophecy and the prophets in retribution is once again not hard to fathom in OT historiography, especially in the works covering the period of the kingdoms. As 2 Kgs 17:13–14 (NRSV) puts it regarding the fall of Israel:

Yet the LORD warned Israel and Judah by every prophet and every seer, saying, "Turn from your evil ways and keep my commandments and my statutes, in accordance with all the law that I commanded your ancestors and that I sent to you by my servants the prophets." They would not listen but were stubborn, as their ancestors had been, who did not believe in the LORD their God.

Frequently in the books of Samuel and Kings we see God speaking directly to the prophets, who then convey God's words to their intended target (e.g., 1 Sam 3:10–14; 2 Sam 7:1–17; 1 Kgs 21:17–19); earlier Joshua also acts as a prophet in this regard in the book devoted to his accomplishments (e.g., 20:1–6). In Chronicles, while the prophets themselves play a more peripheral role (primarily due to the removal of the northern kingdom from the spotlight, and hence the key characters of Elijah and Elisha), prophecy remains central in the delivery of God's commands (e.g., 1 Chr 17:3–15; 2 Chr 12:5–8; 28:9–11).

Linked to this is the central role of the concept and term "the word of the LORD" (Heb. דְּבַר־יְהוָה; the LXX terms will be discussed below). Indeed, the reception and possession of the divine word is the

Idea of Historical Events as Divine Manifestations in the Ancient Near East and in Israel (Lund: Gleerup, 1967), 11–15. See also Gerhard Maier, "Truth and Reality in the Historical Understanding of the Old Testament," in *Israel's Past in Present Research: Essays on Ancient Israelite Historiography* (ed. V. Philips Long; Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 1999), 192–206; Gerhard von Rad, *Old Testament Theology* (trans. D. M. G. Stalker; 2 vols.; London: SCM, 1975), 1:121–28.

constitutive experience and qualification of the prophet.³ Jeremiah 18:18 states the relationship aptly when it asserts that the word is to the prophet as the law is to the priest and counsel to the wise.⁴ Most notable in the OT is the common expression, "The word of the LORD came to [the prophet]." This expression accounts for about half of all OT occurrences of "the word of the LORD."⁵ The connection of the phrase itself to prophetic expression could hardly be tighter—according to Gerhard von Rad, ninety-three percent of its occurrences are in the context of a prophetic oracle, leading von Rad to conclude that there can be "no doubt but that this collocation was used as a technical term for an oral prophetic revelation."⁶ This connection holds in the historiographical works as well as in the prophetic writings themselves. In Genesis through Judges, the only characters who receive the divine word are Abraham, Moses, Balaam, and Joshua. In the books of Samuel, Kings, and Chronicles, where the phrase occurs far more often than in the works covering the earlier history, it is used exclusively in the context of a prophet or "man of God."⁷

This constitutive role of the divine word in prophecy combined with the centrality of prophecy in the OT historiographical works points to the key role of the divine word itself in OT historiography. John L. McKenzie, drawing on the earlier work of Oskar Grether and Otto Procksch, refers to the "word of Yahweh" as "the nerve or the hinge of biblical history."⁸ The prominence of the word is especially strong in Samuel and Kings (LXX Kingdoms). Walther Eichrodt notes regarding the Deuteronomistic History that its authors "sought to present the destiny of the nation systematically as the product of the word of

³ See John L. McKenzie, "The Word of God in the Old Testament," *TS* 21 (1960): 183–206, esp. 191–94; Walter Brueggemann, *Theology of the Old Testament: Testimony, Dispute, Advocacy* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1997), 622.

⁴ So McKenzie, "The Word of God in the Old Testament," 191–92.

⁵ According to von Rad, *Old Testament Theology*, 2:87, 123 out of 241 occurrences of the phrase.

⁶ Von Rad, *Old Testament Theology*, 2:87. Similarly, McKenzie, "The Word of God in the Old Testament," 191.

⁷ These claims are based on the LXX, since this is the version that will ultimately matter to interpreting Luke-Acts, but I would be surprised if there were a difference between the LXX and MT on this matter. In Judg 3:20, Ehud also claims to have a λόγος θεοῦ for Eglon, but of course it is a trick.

⁸ McKenzie, "The Word of God in the Old Testament," 198.

Yahweh,”⁹ so that “the word proves itself the guiding force of history.”¹⁰ Von Rad puts it even more strongly:

For the Deuteronomist the divine guidance of history is established beyond all doubt: but that it is by his word that Jahweh directs history, this is practically hammered into the reader...it is this desire and attempt to understand Israel's history solely in the light of the word of Jahweh that gives the work its theological grandeur...Decisive for the life and death of the people of God is the word of God injected into history.¹¹

The word is not a uniform force throughout these works, however; rather we see a progression. The first two references to the divine word in 1 Samuel (1 Kingdoms) actually refer to its *absence* in the days before Samuel's rise.¹² In the rest of 1 Kingdoms it is only Samuel who receives or speaks the divine word, and always in matters pertaining to the kingship; most noteworthy is that Saul's rejection as king by God is specifically due to Saul's rejection of the divine word (15:23–26). In 2 Kingdoms there is only a handful of references to the word, and only through the prophets Nathan and Gad. These references, however, come at key moments in David's reign: his desire to build a temple (7:4), and his sins of killing Uriah (12:9) and taking a census (24:11).¹³ In the first of these he is told not to build a temple, and in the other two his condemnation in each affair is announced.

In 3 and 4 Kingdoms the divine word explodes. A variety of prophets receive and deliver the divine word in a variety of contexts. Moreover, the narrator reminds the reader whenever a predictive divine word has come true, which is quite often (e.g., 3 Kgdms 2:27; 15:29; 16:34; 22:38; 4 Kgdms 1:17; 7:16; 10:17; 14:25; 15:12; 24:2, 13). Perhaps most notable is the conclusion of the story, when we are told that when the Babylonians and other armies come to destroy Judah, it is “in accordance with the word of the Lord that he spoke through the

⁹ Walther Eichrodt, *Theology of the Old Testament* (trans. J. A. Baker; 2 vols.; Philadelphia: Westminster, 1967), 2:73.

¹⁰ Eichrodt, *Theology of the Old Testament*, 2:74.

¹¹ Von Rad, *Old Testament Theology*, 1:342, 344.

¹² 1 Kgdms 3:1, 7. In the MT Elkanah also enigmatically refers to “his word,” meaning Yahweh's, in 1:23; the LXX, DSS, and Syriac all make it a reference to Hannah's word, which makes more sense in the context. Here and in what follows I will generally refer to the LXX, since that is what Luke would have read.

¹³ There are two additional references, both of far less significance plot-wise. In 2 Kgdms 16:23 we are told that Ahithophel's advice was received as the λόγος τοῦ θεοῦ; in 22:31 David praises the strength of the ῥῆμα κυρίου in song.

hand of his servants the prophets” (4 Kgdms 24:2). The divine word determines the course of history, and Israel’s own place in that history is determined by its obedience or disobedience to the word.

DIVINE RETRIBUTION IN LUKE-ACTS

When we turn to Luke-Acts, the notion of retribution is present, but it does not occupy the central place that it does in the OT narratives. This displacement can be explained in part because divine retribution is largely put off until the eschaton, a factor especially important in Luke’s Gospel. Jesus’ teaching is filled with warnings of judgment, but such judgment is uniformly eschatological, often explicitly, sometimes implicitly. Typical is the judgment Jesus pronounces on those cities that reject the disciples who are sent out: “I tell you, on that day it will be more tolerable for Sodom than for that town” (10:12 NRSV), “that day” of course referring to the last judgment. Many of Jesus’ teachings feature a similar emphasis on eschatological judgment, whether in his parables (e.g., 12:16–21, 42–48; 16:19–31; 19:11–27; 20:9–18) or in other pronouncements (e.g., 9:26; 11:37–52; 12:8–9; 17:1–2; 20:45–57). In other places, such as Luke 17:1–2, the eschatological nature of the judgment is not explicit, but given the overall context of Jesus’ teaching, it is highly improbable that anything other than eschatological judgment is meant:

Jesus said to his disciples, “Occasions for stumbling are bound to come, but woe to anyone by whom they come! It would be better for you if a millstone were hung around your neck and you were thrown into the sea than for you to cause one of these little ones to stumble.” (NRSV)

John the Baptist’s teaching is of course also strongly eschatological, including his threats of judgment (3:9, 17).

When it comes to non-eschatological divine retribution, Jesus in two places explicitly rejects this possibility. The first occurs when his disciples suggest calling down fire from heaven to destroy the Samaritans who did not receive him on his travels (9:52–55). Jesus instead rebukes the disciples for making the suggestion. The second occurs in Jesus’ response to the report “about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices” (13:1 NRSV). Jesus explicitly rejects the idea that these Galileans (and some others who died in another incident) were punished for their sins (13:2–4), and he warns all those present that unless they repent, they will perish, too (13:5). In addition to these specific instances,

the places where Jesus implies that the eschaton will involve a reversal of present circumstances, such as the Lukan beatitudes (6:20–26) and the parable of the rich man and Lazarus (16:19–31), are built on the very notion that retribution does not occur in this lifetime.

Non-eschatological retribution is not entirely absent from Luke, however. Zechariah's punishment of muteness for questioning the angel's pronouncement about having a son is a clear case (1:20), yet it is the *only* instance of retribution in Luke's Gospel that is actually narrated. Jesus' own pronouncements of judgment on Jerusalem in 19:41–44 and 21:20–24 could be interpreted as non-eschatological (though this is debatable),¹⁴ but if so Luke does not narrate the fulfilment of the pronouncements for us. A few other places have possible fulfilments in Acts, though these again are all debatable: The Magnificat announces that God has "brought down the powerful from their thrones" (1:52 NRSV)—is Herod's death (Acts 12:19–23) supposed to be a fulfilment of this?¹⁵ Similarly, does Simeon's prophecy that Jesus is "destined for the falling and the rising of many in Israel" (2:34 NRSV) refer to concrete events we see in Acts? Finally, in Luke 22:21–22 Jesus announces "woe" to his betrayer, but does this refer mainly to his death scene (Acts 1:18–19), or is it rather more about postmortem punishment? It would be hard to argue that it does not at least include his death.¹⁶

Non-eschatological retribution is more prominent in Acts than in Luke's Gospel (eschatological retribution of course remains a theme, as in, e.g., 13:46; 17:31). Judas's death (1:18–19) is not explicitly said to be divine retribution, but the stereotyped description of it combined with Jesus' pronouncement just mentioned makes it clear that it is retribution.¹⁷ The deaths of Ananias and Sapphira (5:1–11) and that of Herod (12:20–23) seem fairly obvious acts of divine retribution, and in Herod's case the judgment is explicit (12:23). The blinding of Elymas (13:8–11) is another instance where the retributive nature of the punishment is explicit (13:11). Two other scenarios are mixed: The shipwreck in Paul's trip to Rome in Acts 27 comes after the centurion fails to heed

¹⁴ It seems clear that the pronouncements refer to the fall of Jerusalem in AD 70, but how the historical destruction of Jerusalem fits in the eschatology of Luke-Acts is contested. See David L. Tiede, *Prophecy and History in Luke-Acts* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1980), 65–96.

¹⁵ O. Wesley Allen, *The Death of Herod: The Narrative and Theological Function of Retribution in Luke-Acts* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1997), 116–21, argues that it is.

¹⁶ See Allen, *The Death of Herod*, 121–24.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

Paul's warning (27:9–12, 21–26), but ultimately God mercifully spares all lives—contrary to Paul's proclamation in v. 10. Paul's blindness at his conversion would seem to be a retributive punishment, but the whole movement of his conversion moves contrary to any notion of retribution.¹⁸ There are also cases of positive retribution: Cornelius's selection for conversion is explicitly said to be a reward for his piety (10:1–6), and the description of Tabitha implies that her resurrection is a reward for her piety, as well (9:36–42).

There are other places where retribution is a theme while not being directly narrated. Gamaliel's speech to the Sanhedrin (5:34–39) suggests that the failures of Theudas and Judas the Galilean were due to their lack of divine commission, and he warns the council of the potential danger in fighting the Christian movement. Stephen's narration of the exodus includes acts of retribution against both Egypt and Israel (7:6–7, 42–43). Peter threatens Simon because of the latter's offer of money for the power of the Holy Spirit (8:18–24), but the exact nature of Simon's danger is not stated. Similarly, a number of statements in the context of preaching involve the threat of punishment without specifying the punishment's exact nature, though eschatological retribution seems most likely in these cases (3:23; 13:40–41; 28:27). Lastly, and with a twist, the inhabitants of Malta who see Paul bit by a viper suggest he is being punished (28:1–6), but this turns out not to be the case.

When examining these passages in Acts, one notes that *the principle of retribution is not applied to the Christian movement*. The only exception is the incident with Ananias and Sapphira (5:1–11), and even with this exception the summary that follows—telling of the success and growth of the Christian movement (5:12–16)—makes it clear that Ananias and Sapphira are anomalies within the movement rather than representatives of it. More importantly, nowhere do we see the apostles or Paul or the church in general subject to any sort of divine retribution or discipline because of their unfaithfulness.¹⁹ Just as importantly, it is also *not* stated that the apostles or others are being rewarded for their faithfulness.²⁰ Even in places where such a claim would make sense,

¹⁸ Ibid., 126–29.

¹⁹ There is the case of Judas, but his position is obviously vastly different from that of the other apostles.

²⁰ There are two possible exceptions: (1) Cornelius's selection for conversion is said to be a reward for his piety (10:1–6), but note that it is his piety prior to his Christian conversion that is rewarded; (2) Tabitha's resurrection is likely meant as a reward for her piety (9:36–42), but the connection of this scene with the rest of the plot is through

such as with the prison escapes (chs. 5, 12, 16) or Paul's safe arrival in Rome (chs. 27–28), we do not find assertions of positive retribution. In the prison escape in Acts 5, for instance, we instead find the apostles rejoicing that they suffered (v. 41), and in Paul's survival of the shipwreck it is a matter of completing his divinely appointed destiny (27:23–26).²¹ The basic faithfulness of the main Christian characters is constant throughout, but their faithfulness is not the basis for concrete rewards in the way that one sees in the OT narratives. The working out of the divine plan, as stated at Acts 1:8 and elsewhere, is the driving force. The most compelling counter-case to the idea of retribution is Paul's conversion in Acts 9, where the principle of retribution seems to be reversed—for the sake of God's plan, for which Paul is to be an instrument (9:15–16).

The small role played by retribution as applied to the Christian movement results in a greatly reconfigured thematic placement of retribution as a feature of Luke's historiography vis-à-vis the OT narratives. Retribution is so prominent in the OT narratives because it is seen as a central aspect of God's relationship with Israel. It is not so central, however, in God's relationship with the Christian movement portrayed in Acts, and hence the prominence of retribution as a theme in Acts is lessened. This point stands out all the more when we note that the retribution principle is displayed prominently in Acts in relation to the Jews to whom the Christian message is proclaimed. We see this most clearly in Peter's speech at the Jerusalem temple following the healing of the beggar (3:19–20, 22–23):

Repent, therefore, and turn back, so that your sins will be wiped away, so that times of refreshing might come from the face of the Lord and that he might send the one appointed for you, Christ Jesus. . . . Moses said, "The Lord your God will raise up a prophet for you from your brothers like me; you will listen to everything that he says to you. And it will be that every soul that does not listen to that prophet will be blotted out from the people."

Peter's raising of her rather than with her status, so it is difficult to ascribe any great thematic importance to this act of positive retribution.

²¹ This is not to deny the presence in these chapters of an undercurrent regarding notions of divine retribution. See Gary B. Miles and Garry Trompf, "Luke and Antiphon: The Theology of Acts 27–28 in the Light of Pagan Beliefs about Divine Retribution, Pollution, and Shipwreck," *HTR* 69 (1976): 259–67.

Paul makes a similar assertion in his missionary sermon at Antioch of Pisidia (13:40–41), and the idea is implicit in Paul’s several statements about turning to the Gentiles (13:46; 18:6; 28:25–28).

In this strand of retribution the distinction between eschatological and non-eschatological becomes less meaningful. When is the “blotting out” that Peter mentions in 3:23 supposed to occur? Paul makes it clear in his rebuke of the Jews at Antioch of Pisidia in 13:46 that “eternal life” (αἰωνίου ζωῆς) is at stake, and his shaking off the dust of his feet shortly thereafter (13:51) also implies eschatological judgment (based on Jesus’ teaching in Luke 10:10–12). Yet it would be hard to argue that Paul’s repeated turning to the Gentiles and the inclusion of Gentile believers when Jews so frequently reject the Christian message as Acts progresses have nothing to do with this retribution.²² The eschatological dimension remains strong, but the people of God is reshaped retributively as a part of Luke’s plot. Undoubtedly this blurring of the distinction is a result of the idea asserted in Peter’s Pentecost speech that they are already living “in the last days” (2:17: ἐν ταῖς ἐσχάταις ἡμέραις). The retributive judgment will not be final until the true eschaton, but its effects are worked out in the course of the eschatological expansion of the Christian mission.

We have also already seen some cases of immediate (non-eschatological) divine retribution toward those who do not accept the Christian message or who oppose the Christian movement in Acts. This is clearly the case with the death of Judas (1:18–19) and with the punishment meted out to Elymas for his opposition to Paul (13:6–11). There is also the case of Herod’s death (12:20–24), where the immediate cause is said to be his acceptance of a crowd’s ascription of divine status to him—but the narrative context suggests that Herod’s general opposition to God’s work is also involved.²³ Judas, Elymas, and Herod are all Jews. The circumstances surrounding Paul’s blindness (9:8–9) and the warning given to Simon (8:20–24) make the evaluation of their punishments (only threatened in Simon’s case) harder to evaluate, but

²² I am operating here with the traditional assessment of Acts as indeed indicating a transition from Jews to Gentiles in the composition of the people of God. Hence I do not accept the view of Jacob Jervell that Christianity remains Jewish throughout Acts; see, e.g., Jacob Jervell, *Luke and the People of God: A New Look at Luke-Acts* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1972), 41–74. I assess Jervell more fully in *Theology as History, History as Theology: Paul in Ephesus in Acts 19* (BZNW 133; Berlin: de Gruyter, 2005), 23–26.

²³ See Allen, *The Death of Herod*, 75–92.

they are Jews, too²⁴—and Paul's punishment is due to his opposition to the Christian movement.

The change in the role of retribution theology in Luke-Acts as compared to the OT historiographical works can thus be summed up by noting the eschatological nature of retribution in Luke's work and the change of subject from the people of Israel as a whole to the Christian movement. The eschatological emphasis results in retribution playing a decreased role as a causal force in history. The movement of the focus off the people of Israel as a whole results in a lessened prominence for retribution regardless of its eschatological or non-eschatological character, since the principle of retribution remains strongly tied to God's relationship with the people of Israel. The Christian movement, which is the subject of Acts, is not portrayed as the recipient of divine retribution. Instead, the response to the Christian movement forms the ground on which retributive judgment is based. Reception of the Christian proclamation and support of the Christian delegates in Acts are thus analogous to obedience to the prophets in OT historiography. In Acts, though, the central subject of the story is not the people of Israel as a whole but the Christian movement itself. If the subject were the people of Israel, we might expect Acts to look more like the Deuteronomistic History, with the Christian representatives playing the role of the prophets.

THE WORD OF GOD IN LUKE-ACTS

This provides the context for understanding Luke's use of the phrase "the word of God/the Lord."²⁵ The role of the divine word in Luke-

²⁴ Simon's ethnicity is not stated, but the context of the story in Acts suggests strongly that he is also a Jew (though a Samaritan one). The conversion of the Samaritans in Acts 8 presents no theological difficulties such as occur when Gentiles begin to be converted in Acts 10; hence the appellation by Jervell, *Luke and the People of God*, 113–32, of the Samaritans in Luke-Acts as the "lost sheep of the house of Israel" is apposite. Making Simon's situation harder to evaluate, however, is the fact that when Peter threatens him he has been baptized (8:13), and the fact that the nature of the threatened punishment is not clear.

²⁵ The thematic prominence of the divine word in Acts is a commonly noted point. E.g., Daniel Marguerat, *The First Christian Historian: Writing the Acts of the Apostles* (trans. K. McKinney, G. J. Laughery, and R. Bauckham; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 37: "The theme of Acts is neither the history of the Church, nor the activity of the Spirit, but the expansion of the Word. The real hero of the Acts of the Apostles is the *logos*, the Word." Similarly, Leo O'Reilly, *Word and Sign in the Acts of*

Acts to a certain extent resembles its role in the OT historical works, but there are distinctive aspects to it in Luke's work that tie in closely with the matters we have been discussing. To see this we must first examine Luke's use of the phrase. While there can be no doubt that Luke's use has its roots in the LXX, it is instructive to note how the divine word in Luke-Acts is like the LXX usage and how it is not.

To begin with a key difference, Luke does not imitate the precise LXX wording. The common LXX expression for the divine word from Genesis to the DH is ῥῆμα κυρίου, and in Chronicles and the prophets it is λόγος κυρίου.²⁶ Luke's favorite wording, in contrast, is λόγος τοῦ θεοῦ, with λόγος τοῦ κυρίου also being common.²⁷ In the LXX both the use of the article with κυρίου/θεοῦ and the use of θεός in place of κύριος are quite uncommon—so that Luke's favorite λόγος τοῦ θεοῦ is actually used only twice in the entire LXX (2 Kgdms 16:23; Jer 1:2).²⁸ Luke *never* uses κύριος in the phrase without the article, and he does so with θεός only once (Luke 3:2).

the Apostles: A Study in Lucan Theology (Rome: Editrice Pontificia Università Gregoriana, 1987), 11. While such claims may be exaggerated, no one would dispute the importance of the divine word in Luke-Acts.

²⁶ In Genesis to Judges ῥῆμα κυρίου is used fifteen times, other expressions three times (if plurals are included, the totals are eighteen and six). In 1–4 Kingdoms ῥῆμα κυρίου is used thirty-eight times, other expressions twenty-two times (almost all of the latter are λόγος κυρίου). In Chronicles λόγος κυρίου is used fifteen times (plus two plurals), other expressions twice. In the prophets, λόγος κυρίου is remarkably dominant: 145 occurrences (plus six plurals), with only six occurrences of other expressions. These LXX expressions do not always translate דבר־יהוה, although that is most often the case; e.g., in Num 14:41 the LXX has ῥῆμα κυρίου; the MT has פִּי־יהוה.

²⁷ In Luke-Acts λόγος τοῦ θεοῦ is used fifteen times, λόγος τοῦ κυρίου nine times; there are also a number of uses of λόγος without any modifier but where it is clear that it refers to the divine word (e.g., Luke 8:12, 13, 15; Acts 4:29; 11:19)—Henry J. Cadbury, "Names for Christians and Christianity in Acts," in *The Beginnings of Christianity: The Acts of the Apostles* (ed. F. J. Foakes Jackson and Kirsopp Lake; London: MacMillan, 1933), 5:375–92, esp. 5:391, counts fourteen such uses. My statistics are based on the NA²⁷ text; many of these occurrences have one or more of the alternate expressions used in other manuscripts; on the textual issues with these expressions, see Jacques Dupont, "Parole de Dieu et Parole du Seigneur," in *Etudes sur les Actes des Apôtres* (Paris: Cerf, 1967), 523–25. This variation among manuscripts is one of the reasons why it is nearly unanimously agreed that there is no significant difference in meaning between the phrases λόγος τοῦ θεοῦ and λόγος τοῦ κυρίου in Luke's writing; on this point, see O'Reilly, *Word and Sign in the Acts of the Apostles*, 11 n. 3; Claus-Peter März, *Das Wort Gottes bei Lukas* (Leipzig: St. Benno, 1974), 6. ῥῆμα is only used in reference to a divine prophetic word twice (Luke 2:29; 3:2); twice more it is used to refer to specific sayings of Jesus (Luke 22:61; Acts 11:16).

²⁸ The article is used *only* in Exod 24:3; Num 22:18; 2 Kgdms 16:23; Isa 40:8; Jer 1:1, 2; Ezek 11:25 (plus a handful of occurrences in the apocryphal works). There are only about a dozen uses of θεός (e.g., Jer 9:19; 1 Chr 15:15).

There are also important differences in the way the phrases are used. The preponderance of OT occurrences refers to specific instances of divine revelation, to messages given at specific times and regarding specific subjects. For example, a ῥῆμα κυρίου comes to Abraham assuring him of God's protection (Gen 15:1), another to Nathan instructing David not to build a temple (2 Kgdms 7:4), and another to Elijah telling him to go to Ahab (3 Kgdms 18:1). Ezekiel, like other prophets, repeatedly reports how the λόγος κυρίου came to him, and each time he gives the specific message conveyed. In Luke-Acts, on the other hand, we *never* see any of these phrases used to refer to such a specific message.²⁹ The closest Luke comes to this usage is with his single imitation of the OT phrase, "the word of God came to..." in Luke 3:2, referring to John the Baptist. Even here a description of John's activity, not a specific message, follows.³⁰ Luke instead uses the "word of" phrases most often to refer to general teaching or preaching, and in Acts specifically to Christian teaching or preaching.³¹ The context is usually a summary of the proclamation of the Christian message or its reception. This type of use to summarize speaking or response occurs very rarely in the OT.³²

When we identify the range of contexts in which the phrases are used in Luke-Acts, the different verbs that are used in Luke's work vis-à-vis the OT historiographical works stand out. Besides the "the word of the Lord came to" expression, the most common situations in which the divine word is referred to in the OT are the following:

²⁹ In fact, this seems to be the case not only for Luke, but for the whole NT. Kittel (*TDNT* 4:113) provides a provocative explanation for this change in the sense of the divine word from the OT to the NT:

The reason for this obvious and remarkable fact is that after the coming of Jesus the Word of God or the Word of the Lord has for the whole of primitive Christianity a new and absolutely exclusive sense. It has become the undisputed term for the one Word of God which God has spoken, and speaks, in what has taken place in Jesus and in the message concerning it.

³⁰ Note also that it is a λόγος θεοῦ here, not κυρίου, though this is the one place where Luke omits the article, undoubtedly in imitation of the LXX usage. Luke 2:29 is also close to the OT use, but once again no specific message is included. In Luke 22:61 and Acts 11:16 the ῥῆμα τοῦ κυρίου refers to specific sayings of Jesus, but this is clearly a different sort of "word of the Lord" than the OT oracles.

³¹ See O'Reilly, *Word and Sign in the Acts of the Apostles*, 11–14; Jerome Kodell, "The Word of God Grew: The Ecclesial Tendency of Λόγος in Acts 1,7; 12,24; 19,20," *Bib* 55 (1974): 505–19, esp. 509.

³² 1 Kgdms 8:10 is the only occurrence strongly resembling Luke's usage: Samuel is said to speak πᾶν τὸ ῥῆμα κυρίου πρὸς τὸν λαόν. Other references to speaking or proclaiming the divine word can be found in 4 Kgdms 7:1; 20:16; 23:16; but in all these the divine word remains very specific in its content.

- The word is transgressed (παρβαίνω), despised (φασλίζω, ὑπεροράω), disobeyed (ἀπειθέω, οὐκ εἰσακούω), disdained (ἐξουθενώ), or rebelled against (παρσπικραίνω): Num 14:41; 15:31; 31:16; Deut 1:26, 43; 9:23; 1 Kgdms 15:23, 24, 26; 2 Kgdms 12:9; 3 Kgdms 13:21, 26; 2 Chr 34:21.
- The word is to be heard (ἀκούω), not transgressed (οὐ παρβαίνω), or acted “in accordance with” (κατά): Num 22:18; 24:13; Josh 3:9; 1 Kgdms 9:27; 3 Kgdms 22:19; 4 Kgdms 9:26; 2 Chr 18:18; 35:6.
- An event happens “according to” (κατά) the word (3 Kgdms 15:29; 16:34; 17:16; 22:38; 4 Kgdms 1:17; 4:44; 7:16; 10:17; 23:16; 14:25; 24:2, 13; 1 Chr 11:3, 10; 12:24), sometimes said to have been spoken (λαλέω) by a specific prophet (e.g., 4 Kgdms 23:16); or the word is said to be fulfilled (πληρώω) or to be shown true (3 Kgdms 2:27; 4 Kgdms 9:36; 15:12; 2 Chr 36:21, 22; Dan 9:2). The frequency of this type of use underscores the specificity of the divine word in the OT context.

In Luke-Acts, once again in contrast, more than two-thirds of the references to the divine word refer to the proclamation of the Christian message or its reception (as just mentioned). The most common verbs used with it are λαλέω (Acts 4:29, 31; 8:25; 11:19; 13:46; 14:25; 16:6, 32), ἀκούω (Luke 5:1; 8:21; 11:28; Acts 4:4; 10:44; 13:7, 44; 19:10), καταγγέλλω (Acts 13:5; 15:36; 17:13), δέχομαι (Acts 8:14; 11:1; 17:11), αὐξάνω (6:7; 12:24; 19:20), εὐαγγελίζω (Acts 8:4; 15:35), and πληθύνω (6:7; 12:24). Thus the only significant overlap of use between the LXX and Luke-Acts is in the basic notion of speaking and hearing the word. The paucity of negative verbs in Luke-Acts is especially striking, perhaps even surprising given that Jesus’ teaching and the Christian message certainly meet with resistance in Luke’s story, but Luke tends to avoid expressing such resistance in terms of opposition to the divine word (but see below for discussion of Acts 13:46).

THE DIVINE WORD AND PROPHECY IN LUKE-ACTS

Given these differences both in precise wording and in the contexts in which the divine word occurs in Luke-Acts vis-à-vis the OT, where can we see the connection? The answer is in the theme of prophecy: The divine word remains prophetic in Luke-Acts as it is in the OT texts.

The prophetic portrayal of the major characters in Luke-Acts is well established in scholarship.³³ Jesus identifies himself as a prophet at the

³³ See my discussion of this trend in Lukan scholarship in *Theology as History*, 31–36. Probably the most important works are Paul S. Minear, *To Heal and to Reveal: The Prophetic*

beginning of his ministry (Luke 4:24–27) and is described as a prophet in the speeches of Peter and Stephen (Acts 3:22–23; 7:37, 52; cf. also Luke 24:19), most importantly as the prophet predicted by Moses who would indeed be like Moses.³⁴ The major characters in Acts are then modeled after Jesus; their prophetic status can be seen through their empowerment by the Holy Spirit, their performance of miracles, their acceptance as well as their rejection by their hearers, and their speaking the word of God.³⁵

A significant point in the Acts narrative where we see the connection between the prophetic portrayal of the protagonists of Acts, the idea of divine retribution, and the proclamation and reception of the divine word is in the response Paul receives to his first reported missionary speech, at Antioch of Pisidia (13:42–52).³⁶ Here we have the highest concentration of references to the divine word in Luke-Acts, with four explicit mentions of the λόγος of “the Lord” (vv. 44, 48, 49) or “God” (v. 46),³⁷ and an additional pronominal reference in v. 46. It is above all the description of Paul (and Barnabas) as speaking the divine word (vv. 44, 46) that emphasizes their prophetic status in the passage, but we also see them commissioned with the prophetic message in the “turning to the Gentiles” quotation of Isa 49:6 (13:47), and the

Vocation According to Luke (New York: Seabury, 1976) and Luke Timothy Johnson, *The Literary Function of Possessions in Luke-Acts* (Missoula, Mont.: Scholars Press, 1977).

³⁴ See John A. Darr, *On Character Building: The Reader and the Rhetoric of Characterization in Luke-Acts* (Louisville, Ky.: Westminster John Knox, 1992), 147–68; Richard J. Dillon, *From Eye-Witnesses to Ministers of the Word: Tradition and Composition in Luke 24* (AnBib 82; Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1978), 117–45; Johnson, *The Literary Function of Possessions in Luke-Acts*, 29–126; Robert J. Karris, *Luke, Artist and Theologian: Luke's Passion Account as Literature* (New York: Paulist, 1985), 19–125; Minear, *To Heal and to Reveal*, 102–21; David P. Moessner, “Luke 9:1–50: Luke's Preview of the Journey of the Prophet Like Moses of Deuteronomy,” *JBL* 102 (1983): 575–605; O'Reilly, *Word and Sign in the Acts of the Apostles*, 170–82; Tiede, *Prophecy and History in Luke-Acts*, 39–63.

³⁵ See esp. Johnson, *The Literary Function of Possessions in Luke-Acts*, 38–69; also Minear, *To Heal and to Reveal*, 122–47; O'Reilly, *Word and Sign in the Acts of the Apostles*, 182–90.

³⁶ On the important place of this episode in the Acts narrative, see esp. Jacques Dupont, “Je t'ai établi lumière des nations (Ac 13, 14.43–52),” in *Nouvelles études sur les Actes des Apôtres* (Paris: Cerf, 1984), 343–49, who refers to the episode as “une sorte de prototype de Luke-Acts mission paulinienne” (344). See also Alfons Weiser, *Die Apostelgeschichte* (2 vols.; Gütersloh: Mohn, 1981–1985), 339–40; Josef Zmijewski, *Die Apostelgeschichte* (Regensburg: Friedrich Pustet, 1994), 516.

³⁷ As is common in Luke-Acts, manuscripts frequently differ on whether to read “God” or “Lord” in each place. On these textual problems and the essential interchangeability of the “word of God” and “word of the Lord” phrases in Luke-Acts, see n. 27 above.

combination of acceptance and rejection of their message displayed in this passage is also tied to their prophetic portrayal.³⁸ Paul's statement that the Jews at Antioch "reject" (ἀπωθεῖσθε) the word of God in v. 46 strengthens the tie to prophecy and the OT historiographical tradition since as noted above, such negative language in references to the divine word is common in the OT works. This is an exceptional occurrence in the context of Luke-Acts, however.³⁹ The link to retribution theology is straightforward and strong. In rejecting the divine word, Paul tells the Jews, "You judge yourselves unworthy of eternal life" (v. 46); the Gentiles on the other hand "were rejoicing and glorifying the word of the Lord," and they are appointed to the eternal life that the Jews of Antioch reject (v. 48). The eschatological judgment implied against both the Jews and the others at Antioch who reject Paul and Barnabas is emphasized by the symbolic shaking of the dust from the missionaries' feet (v. 51), with the punishment promised by Jesus for such folk (Luke 10:10–12) looming tacitly.

There are several other passages in Acts where we similarly see the tie between the divine word, prophecy, and retribution, if not quite so intensely as in the Antioch scene. At Paphos (13:6–12) the proconsul Sergius Paulus seeks to hear "the word of God" from Paul and Barnabas. Paul and Barnabas are here contrasted with the "false prophet" (ψευδοπροφήτης) Elymas (v. 6), and we saw earlier that the latter's fate is one of the instances of immediate retribution in Acts.⁴⁰ When Paul preaches "the word" in Corinth (18:5–6),⁴¹ Paul's response to the Jewish rejection of it is one of the places where he sounds most

³⁸ See Johnson, *The Literary Function of Possessions in Luke-Acts*, 38–69.

³⁹ While the sense of the sentence is similar to many OT references to the divine word, the actual use of ἀπωθεῖσθαι is not, though its use in the context of rejecting the divine word can be found in Jer 23:17. Much more commonly it refers to God's rejection of the people or some subset thereof; e.g., Judg 6:13; 1 Kgdms 12:22; 4 Kgdms 21:14.

⁴⁰ Luke Timothy Johnson, *The Acts of the Apostles* (SP 5; Collegeville, Minn.: Liturgical, 1992), 226, states that in this episode Luke wants "to show that Paul is a genuine prophet in continuity with Jesus and Peter."

⁴¹ While I have generally been restricting my comments until now to passages where the *divine* nature of the word is explicit (i.e., with an "of God" or "of the Lord"), that is not the case here. The RSV, in fact, translates λόγος here merely as "preaching." But given the content of the "word" spelled out at the end of v. 5 as referring to the message about Jesus, combined with the context of opposition and subsequent judgment in v. 7, and then the explicit mention of the "word of God" in v. 11, it seems safe to say here that the divine word is what is meant in v. 5. The NRSV rightfully puts "the word" back in its translation of v. 5. See also Marguerat, *First Christian Historian*, 37.

like an OT prophet, and with the emphasis on retribution: “Your blood be on your heads—I am clean” (v. 6), strongly echoing Ezek 33:1–9.⁴² Immediately following this judgment is Paul’s second assertion of his turning to the Gentiles, and a few verses later Paul receives divine confirmation of his proclamatory activity in Corinth in a vision much like Jeremiah’s (Acts 18:9–10; Jer 1:5–10, 17–19).⁴³ In these instances “the word” refers to Christian preaching, so it is not surprising to see these types of references in Acts playing a role similar to the divine word in the OT historiographical narratives.

ECCLESIAL DIMENSIONS OF THE WORD OF GOD

More interesting are the places where “the word” takes on a character rather different from the OT uses—the places where “the word” refers less to physical utterance and more to the Christian movement itself. There are three places where it is clear that “the word” refers to the Christian movement, all in the context of summaries:⁴⁴

- 6:7a: “And the word of God was increasing, and the number of disciples in Jerusalem was being multiplied greatly.”
- 12:24: “The word of God was increasing and being multiplied.”
- 19:20: “Thus mightily the word of the Lord was increasing and prevailing.”⁴⁵

⁴² So Wilfried Eckey, *Die Apostelgeschichte: Der Weg des Evangeliums von Jerusalem nach Rom* (2 vols.; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 2000), 415; Beverly Roberts Gaventa, *The Acts of the Apostles* (Nashville: Abingdon, 2003), 257; Robert C. Tannehill, *The Narrative Unity of Luke-Acts: A Literary Interpretation* (2 vols.; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1986–1990), 2:223; Robert W. Wall, “The Acts of the Apostles,” in *The New Interpreter’s Bible*, vol. 10 (Nashville: Abingdon, 2002), 254; Ben Witherington, *The Acts of the Apostles: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1997), 549. See also 2 Sam 1:16 and Ezek 3:18 for similar expressions.

⁴³ A point noted by many commentators, e.g., Eckey, *Die Apostelgeschichte*, 417; John B. Polhill, *Acts* (NAC 26; Nashville: Broadman, 1992), 386; Tannehill, *The Narrative Unity of Luke-Acts*, 2:225; Witherington, *The Acts of the Apostles*, 551. For prophetic scenes similar to those of Jeremiah and Paul, see also Exod 3:2–12; Josh 1:1–9; Isa 41:10–14; 43:5.

⁴⁴ On these verses, in particular the ecclesial sense of “the word” in them, see esp. Kodell, “‘The Word of God Grew’” (see n. 31; note that there is an error in Kodell’s title, which should read 6:7 instead of 1:7). See also Shauf, *Theology as History*, 294–97; Zmijewski, *Die Apostelgeschichte*, 474–75.

⁴⁵ Οὕτως κατὰ κράτος τοῦ κυρίου ὁ λόγος ἡύξανεν καὶ ἰσχυεν. With most translations and commentators I construe τοῦ κυρίου here with ὁ λόγος rather than κράτος. See Shauf, *Theology as History*, 233 n. 361.

There are a few other texts where this sense is possible but debated. Most notable is in the preface to Luke's Gospel, where the author refers to those who were "eyewitnesses and servants of the word" (1:2: αὐτόπται καὶ ὑπηρέται... τοῦ λόγου).⁴⁶ Acts 13:49 also says that "the word of the Lord spread through the whole region" (διεφέρετο δὲ ὁ λόγος τοῦ κυρίου δι' ὅλης τῆς χώρας; cf. also Acts 6:4; 8:21; 10:36; 13:48). While these references certainly make sense if one interprets them as referring to the church, many interpreters instead take them to refer to the proclamation of the Christian message.⁴⁷ In the three texts quoted above, however, there is general agreement on the ecclesial sense.⁴⁸

There is no OT precedent for this ecclesial conception of the divine word, that is, in reference to a group or movement rather than to a direct divine utterance. The striking point to note, however, is how this use resonates with the role played by the church discussed earlier. We saw that the Christian movement is not the recipient of divine retribution in Acts but rather provides the ground on which retributive judgment is based, primarily where the people of Israel are concerned. That the church itself should thus be referred to as "the word" is fitting. Not only do the Christian messengers proclaim the divine word, but the Christian movement is an embodiment of the word. The church itself is the message upon whose reception divine judgment is based, for good or ill. Just as "the word of the Lord" was spoken to the people of Israel in former days, so now in Acts the divine word is sent out in the form of the movement called the Way, and divine judgment is dependent on acceptance or rejection of this word. In the OT narratives the divine

⁴⁶ E.g., Christopher F. Evans, *Saint Luke* (TPINTC; Philadelphia: Trinity Press International, 1990), 128, states somewhat weakly, "It cannot be ruled out that by *ho logos* here Luke means the Christian movement." Often, however, "the word" here is taken only to mean the Christian message; e.g., I. Howard Marshall, *The Gospel of Luke: A Commentary on the Greek Text* (NIGTC; Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1978), 42; John Nolland, *Luke 1-9:20* (WBC 35a; Dallas: Word, 1989), 8.

⁴⁷ E.g., Ernst Haenchen, *The Acts of the Apostles: A Commentary* (trans. Bernard Noble et al.; Philadelphia: Westminster, 1971), 414 n. 6, takes the reference in 13:48 to refer to preaching.

⁴⁸ See esp. the references in n. 44. On 6:7a see also, e.g., Haenchen, *The Acts of the Apostles*, 264; Jacob Jervell, *Die Apostelgeschichte* (KEK 3; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1998), 220; Gaventa, *The Acts of the Apostles*, 116; Johnson, *The Acts of the Apostles*, 107; on 12:24, see also C. K. Barrett, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles* (2 vols.; Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1994, 1998), 595; Haenchen, *The Acts of the Apostles*, 387; on 19:20, see also Eckey, *Die Apostelgeschichte*, 441; Johnson, *The Acts of the Apostles*, 342.

word comes to a prophet, who then delivers it to its target. While the prophetic delivery of the divine word also occurs in Acts, its “coming” to individual prophets does not. When the status of the church itself as the word is grasped, it becomes all the more apparent why the “coming” of the word in Luke’s story is unnecessary. The presence of the word in the church renders it thus.

A number of interpreters helpfully relate Luke’s ecclesial use of “the word” in Acts to his version of the parable of the sower in Luke 8:4–15.⁴⁹ In Luke’s Gospel, unlike in Matthew and Mark, the seed specifically refers to the word τοῦ θεοῦ (Luke 8:11). Moreover, the verbs used to describe the responses to the word in the explanation of the parable are among those most commonly used in references to the reception of the word in Acts (ἀκούω in vv. 12, 13, 14, 15; δέχομαι in v. 13). Hence in Acts when the word refers to the growth of the Christian movement, it is an easy conclusion to draw that Luke is displaying the hundredfold bearing of fruit described by Jesus in Luke 8:8. The growth of the divine word in Acts represents the seed that falls on the good soil, that is, “those who, having heard the word with a noble and good heart, hold fast and bear fruit with perseverance” (Luke 8:15). The growth of the Christian movement as the word is therefore an outgrowth of the ministry of Jesus. Jesus himself is said to speak τὸν λόγον τοῦ θεοῦ in Luke 5:1, clearly one of the ways the Christian proclamation is tied to that of Jesus, and a way both are tied to the OT prophetic proclamation.⁵⁰

In this relationship between Luke’s use of the phrase “the word of God” and the role that divine retribution plays in his narrative, we can see how two theological concepts that figure prominently in OT historiography have been transformed as a part of the continuation of biblical history represented by Luke-Acts. The transformation is due in part to a changed understanding of how God acts retributively in

⁴⁹ E.g., Kodell, “‘The Word of God Grew,’” 517; Wolfgang Reinhardt, *Das Wachstum des Gottesvolkes* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1995), 103–16; William C. Robinson, Jr., “On Preaching the Word of God (Luke 8:4–21),” in *Studies in Luke-Acts: Essays Presented in Honor of Paul Schubert* (ed. L. E. Keck and J. L. Martyn; Nashville: Abingdon, 1966), 131–38.

⁵⁰ A point noted by many, e.g., Adolf von Harnack, *The Constitution and Law of the Church in the First Two Centuries* (ed. H. D. A. Major; trans. F. L. Pogson; London: Williams & Norgate, 1910), 334; Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *The Gospel According to Luke (I–IX)* (AB 28; Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1981), 565; Joel B. Green, *The Gospel of Luke* (NICNT; Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1997), 232; Nolland, *Luke 1–9:20*, 224.

history, with the emphasis in Luke-Acts being on eschatological retribution, though as we have noted, eschatology is not entirely futuristic in Luke-Acts. The transformation is also due to the changed subject matter of Luke-Acts vis-à-vis the OT historiographical works, with the Christian movement being the focus rather than the people of Israel as a whole. This change of focus is itself a theological matter. His conviction that the Christian movement embodies "the word of God" refocuses biblical history for Luke. Hence the transformation of the concepts of the divine word and divine retribution relates integrally to Luke's representation of God's prophetic involvement in history.

“YOUR SONS AND YOUR DAUGHTERS WILL PROPHECY...”: PAIRINGS OF MEN AND WOMEN IN LUKE-ACTS

Allen Black

Luke-Acts, especially the Gospel, contains multiple references to women, particularly women paired with men.¹ In the Gospel, Luke’s interest in stories that involve women is apparent whether one reads Luke

¹ Of course these are common observations. In a 1993 article (“Women in the Gospel of Luke,” in *Essays on Women in Earliest Christianity* [2 vols.; ed. Carroll D. Osburn; Joplin, Mo.: College Press, 1993–1995], 1:445–46 n. 2), I cited seventeen publications focused fairly broadly on women in Luke-Acts between 1974 and 1991. The intervening years have seen the publication of many more, including: Robert J. Karris, “Women and Discipleship in Luke,” *CBQ* 56 (1994): 1–20; Turid Karlsen Seim, *The Double Message: Patterns of Gender in Luke-Acts* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1994); eadem, “The Gospel of Luke,” in *Searching the Scriptures* (2 vols.; ed. Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza; New York: Crossroad, 1993–1994), 2:728–62; Clarice J. Martin, “The Acts of the Apostles,” in *Searching the Scriptures*, 2:763–99; Ivoni Richter Reimer, *Women in the Acts of the Apostles: A Feminist Liberation Perspective* (trans. Linda M. Maloney; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1995); Barbara E. Reid, *Choosing the Better Part? Women in the Gospel of Luke* (Collegeville, Minn.: Liturgical, 1996); James Malcolm Arlandson, *Women, Class, and Society in Early Christianity: Models from Luke-Acts* (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1997); Loretta Dornisch, “A Woman Reads the Gospel of Luke: Introduction and Luke 1: The Infancy Narratives,” *BR* 42 (1997): 7–22; Robert Price, *The Widow Traditions in Luke-Acts: A Feminist-Critical Scrutiny* (SBLDS 155; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1997); Barbara E. Reid, “Choosing the Better Part,” *BR* 42 (1997): 23–31; Turid Karlsen Seim, “Searching for the Silver Coin: A Response to Loretta Dornisch and Barbara Reid,” *BR* 42 (1997): 32–42; Jane Schaberg, “Luke,” in *Women’s Bible Commentary* (expanded ed.; ed. Carol A. Newsom and Sharon H. Ringe; Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1998), 363–80; Gail R. O’Day, “Acts,” in Newsom and Ringe, *Women’s Bible Commentary*, 394–402; Bonnie Thurston, *Women in the New Testament* (Companions to the New Testament; New York: Crossroad, 1998); Ben Witherington, *The Acts of the Apostles: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), 334–39; Mary Rose D’Angelo, “(Re)Presentations of Women in the Gospel of Matthew and Luke-Acts,” in *Women & Christian Origins* (ed. Ross Shepard Kraemer and Mary Rose D’Angelo; New York: Oxford, 1999), 171–91; F. Scott Spencer, “Out of Mind, Out of Voice: Slave-Girls and Prophetic Daughters in Luke-Acts,” *BibInt* 7 (1999): 133–55; Amy-Jill Levine with Marianne Blickenstaff, eds., *A Feminist Companion to Luke* (Feminist Companion to the New Testament and Early Christian Writings 3; London: Sheffield Academic, 2002); Amy-Jill Levine with Marianne Blickenstaff, eds., *A Feminist Companion to the Acts of the Apostles* (Cleveland: Pilgrim, 2004); Beverly Roberts Gaventa, “Whatever Happened to Those Prophesying Daughters?” in Levine and Blickenstaff, *A Feminist Companion to the Acts of the Apostles*, 49–60.

alone using a more literary method or reads it redaction-critically in comparison with Mark or Matthew.²

A phenomenon that stands out, especially in the Gospel, is the frequent pairing of men and women. In the Gospel the pairings of women and men include the following:³

*Mary (1:26–38, 46–56)	Zechariah (1:5–23, 67–79)
*Anna (2:36–38)	Simeon (2:25–35)
*Widow of Zerephath (4:25–26)	Naaman (4:27)
Peter's Mother-in-Law (4:38–39)	Possessed Man (4:33–35)
Widow at Nain (7:11–17)	Centurion at Capernaum (7:1–10)
*Widow at Nain's Son (7:11–17)	Jairus's Daughter (8:40–42a, 49–56)
Sinful Woman (7:36–50)	Simon the Pharisee (7:36–50)
Women Who Accompany Jesus (8:1–3)	The Twelve (6:12–16)
Jairus' Daughter (8:40–42a, 49–56)	Woman with Hemorrhage (8:42b–48)
*Queen of the South (11:31)	Ninevites (11:32)
*Woman Healed on Sabbath (13:10–17)	Man Healed on Sabbath (14:1–6)
*Abraham's Daughter (13:16)	Abraham's Son (19:9)
*Woman Who Hid Yeast (13:20–21)	Man Who Sowed Seed (13:18–19)
*Woman with Coins (15:8–10)	Shepherd with Sheep (15:3–7)
*Women Grinding (17:35)	Men (?) Sleeping (17:34)
Widow and the Judge (18:1–8)	Pharisee and the Tax Collector (18:9–14)
Widow and the Judge (18:1–8)	Importunate Friend (11:5–8)
Maid Accuses Peter (22:56)	Men Accuse Peter (22:58–60)
Women at Tomb (24:1–11, 22–24)	Emmaus Disciples (24:13–35)
*Women at Tomb (24:1–11, 22–24)	Peter at Tomb (24:12)

In Acts there are significantly fewer paired *stories* of men and women, but there are many references to the importance of the inclusion of

² Luke has twelve references to women in common with Mark (Luke 3:19; 4:38–39; 8:19–21, 40–56; 18:29; 20:27–40, 47; 21:1–4, 23; 22:56; 23:49; 24:1–11). There are only three references to women in Mark (6:17–29; 7:24–30; 14:3–9) that are not paralleled in Luke. Presuming Luke's use of Mark, he keeps the vast majority of Mark's references to women. Luke has seven parallels to Matthew alone (Luke 7:28; 11:31; 12:53; 13:21–22; 14:26; 16:18; 17:35).

³ The asterisks indicate cases that seem more significant to Seim, *The Double Message*, 13–14. More explanation of Seim's criteria is provided below.

women and men in the Way, including the phrase “both men and women”⁴ and named pairs/couples:

Named men and women waiting in Jerusalem (1:13–14)
 Menservants and maidservants, sons and daughters (2:17–18)
 Ananias and Sapphira (5:1–11)
 “Both men and women” added (5:14)
 Paul persecutes “both men and women” (8:3)
 “Both men and women” are baptized at Samaria (8:12)
 *Tabitha (9:36–43); Aeneas (9:32–35)
 “Devout women of high standing and leading men of the city” oppose Paul (13:50)
 Lydia (16:11–15); Philippian Jailor (16:23–34)
 Women and men at Thessalonica join Paul and Silas (17:4)
 “A woman named Damaris” and “Dionysius the Areopagite” (17:34)
 Priscilla and Aquila (18:1–3, 26)
 Men, women, and children at Tyre escort Paul out (21:5)⁵
 Philip’s four daughters who prophesy and Agabus the prophet (21:8–11)
 Paul persecutes “both men and women” (22:4)
 Felix and Drusilla (24:24)
 Agrippa and Bernice (25:13, 23; 26:30)

Gender is clearly relevant in the texts in Acts that make a point of the inclusion of “both men and women” among the early disciples, sometimes using that exact phrase (Acts 5:14; 8:3, 12; 22:4) and other times simply making the point of gender inclusion (1:13–14; 2:17–18; 17:4, 34; 21:5). In these cases the text makes a point that men *and* women were waiting in Jerusalem (1:13–14), were converted (5:14; 8:12; 17:4, 34), were recipients of the Spirit (2:17–18), prayed as Paul left Tyre (21:5), and were among those persecuted by Paul before he became a Christian (8:3; 22:4).

The gender significance of the other cases is more difficult to determine. Certainly the impression left by the totality is that Luke has a special interest in gender. But specific cases may be questioned. Does Luke mention Drusilla because of a special interest in women? Does he mention Peter’s mother-in-law in an effort to balance male and female healings at Capernaum? Does he care whether his parables about prayer are balanced with one female and one male protagonist?

⁴ All quotations are from the NRSV unless otherwise noted.

⁵ O’Day, “Acts,” 396, argues reasonably that γυναιξί in 21:5 should be translated “women” rather than “wives” and is thus a reference to “the inclusiveness of the Christian community at Tyre.”

In her influential book on the treatment of women in Luke-Acts, Seim suggests that the pairings of women and men in Luke-Acts that most probably have gender significance are those that not only touch on a similar theme but also have “formal similarities as well, whether these are verbally identical formulations and/or a common and clear location of two or more instances in the same list of examples or narrative sequence.”⁶ The results of Seim’s considerations are that she considers the items I have marked with an asterisk to be the pairings with the most promise for gender significance. (I would add the Women Who Accompany Jesus/the Twelve [Luke 8:1–3; 6:12–16] and Lydia/the Philippian Jailor [Acts 16:11–15, 23–34].) We must also consider the significance of all the texts in Acts that are not narrative pairings, but emphasize the inclusion of both men and women among the followers of Christ. Altogether, the narrative pairings and the emphasis on inclusion create a total impression that Luke has a significant emphasis on gender inclusiveness.

How are we to explain Luke’s interest in pointing out that both women and men were part of the Way and his tendency to pair stories of men and women?

Two conflicting answers have dominated scholarship. One is well represented by Witherington in his 1980s monographs⁷ and reiterated in his more recent commentary on Acts.⁸ Witherington argues that Luke presents a more enlightened view of women that “shows how the Gospel liberates and creates new possibilities for women. . . . [W]e find women being converted or serving the Christian community in roles that [in many cases] would not have been available to them apart from that community.”⁹ This position, as Witherington makes clear in his commentary on Acts, depends upon a comparison of women’s activities in Luke-Acts with what we are able to reconstruct of the cultures in which those actions took place. This is an extraordinarily complex project and it is not clear, even using the resources Witherington himself

⁶ Seim, *The Double Message*, 14.

⁷ Ben Witherington, *Women in the Ministry of Jesus* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984); *Women in the Earliest Churches* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988).

⁸ Witherington, *The Acts of the Apostles*, 334–39.

⁹ *Women in the Earliest Churches*, 156–57; repeated in *The Acts of the Apostles*, 338–39. One may wonder how true this would be of the “Greek women of high standing” (RSV) who were converted at Thessalonica according to Acts 17:12.

cites (especially Brooten, Levine, Kraemer, and Cantarella),¹⁰ that one could make his case that Luke presents women in early Christianity as serving in roles that would not be available to them in Judaism or other religions of that time.

The works by Brooten and Levine cited by Witherington are generally among those that open our understanding to leadership roles played by Jewish women, especially in the Diaspora, and the works he cites by Kraemer and Cantarella do the same for other religions as well.¹¹ If anything, they seem to lessen the likelihood that Luke is portraying Jesus or the early Christians as violating social norms with respect to women. Unlike the case of tax collectors, sinners, or Samaritans, neither Luke nor Acts indicates that Jesus or any Christian missionaries say anything surprising or behave in any surprising ways toward women.¹²

In the 1980s and earlier the view held by Witherington was perhaps the most popular understanding. Today many, especially but not

¹⁰ Bernadette Brooten, *Women Leaders in the Ancient Synagogue: Inscriptional Evidence and Background Issues* (BJS 36; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1982); Amy-Jill Levine, ed., *"Women Like This": New Perspectives on Jewish Women in the Greco-Roman World* (SBLEJL; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1991); Ross Kraemer, "Women in the Religions of the Greco-Roman World," *RelSRev* 9 (1983): 127–39; Eva Cantarella, *Pandora's Daughters: The Role & Status of Women in Greek & Roman Antiquity* (trans. Maureen B. Fant; Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1987). In addition to the article Witherington cites for Kraemer see also *Her Share of the Blessings: Women's Religions among Pagans, Jews, and Christians in the Greco-Roman World* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992).

¹¹ For more recent assessments of the roles of women in early Christianity in connection with current evaluations of women's roles in Jewish and Greco-Roman religions, see Carolyn Osiek and David L. Balch, *Families in the New Testament World: Household and House Churches* (The Family, Religion, and Culture; Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1997); David L. Balch and Carolyn Osiek, eds., *Early Christian Families in Context: An Interdisciplinary Dialogue* (Religion, Marriage, and Family; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003); and Carolyn Osiek and Margaret Y. MacDonald with Janet H. Tulloch, *A Woman's Place: House Churches in Earliest Christianity* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2006). The standard sourcebook on women's life in Greece and Rome is that of Mary R. Lefkowitz and Maureen B. Fant, ed., *Women's Life in Greece and Rome: A Sourcebook in Translation* (3rd ed.; Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2005).

¹² In response to Witherington's statement "that Luke will stress again and again that women are among the oppressed that Jesus came to liberate" (*Women in the Earliest Churches*, 128), Stevan Davies says that if this is so it is strange that Luke does not clarify that he considers women to be oppressed and in need of liberation. Cf. Stevan Davies, "Women in the Third Gospel and the New Testament Apocrypha," in Levine, *"Women Like This"*, 185–86. By contrast Luke does make this clear for tax collectors, sinners, Samaritans, and the poor. Luke 24:11, the apostles' disbelief of the report of the women at the tomb, might be taken to suggest that women were oppressed. But it is not clear from Luke's text whether or not the women are doubted because they are women. Cf. Mark 16:11 and 13, which, although not original to Mark, provide examples in which the disbelief is not connected to the gender of the witnesses.

exclusively feminist scholars, hold an opposing viewpoint that Luke-Acts suppresses the leadership roles of women in early Christianity. This view is well represented by Schaberg's comments on Luke and O'Day's comments on Acts in the *Women's Bible Commentary*. These scholars believe Luke is restricting women's activities in his narrative to that which is acceptable within the norms of the Roman Empire.¹³ They contrast Luke's portrait, especially in Acts, with the portrait of women's activities in early Christianity that may be gleaned from the letters of Paul, a more egalitarian portrait with women in many leadership roles.¹⁴

To some extent the case for Luke's suppression of women's voice can be made internally within Luke-Acts by comparing the references to women in Luke with those in Acts and by comparing the speech and activities of men with those of women. There are far fewer references to stories about women in Acts than in Luke, perhaps indicating Luke's disinclination to say much about women's roles in early Christianity as opposed to during Jesus' life.¹⁵ The prophets Simeon and Agabus speak important prophecies in the narrative, but Anna is mentioned in the same context with Simeon and says very little,¹⁶ and the four daughters of Philip are identified as prophetesses in the same context as Agabus but are silenced.¹⁷ This silencing is typical and perhaps represents a desire on Luke's part to suppress the voice and leadership roles of women.¹⁸

The strongest case for this position comes from reconstructing a more egalitarian Paul based upon a Pauline corpus that omits Colossians, Ephesians, the Pastorals, and, on text-critical grounds, 1 Cor 14:34–35.

¹³ Cf. Schaberg, "Luke," 367: "Luke emphasizes Jesus' ministry to women, but whether this emphasis is enhancing or restricting depends on the angles from which the evidence is examined and on that to which it is compared"; O'Day, "Acts," 401: "Luke's sense of decorum means that women in the early church cannot be portrayed in ways that would be embarrassing or threatening to men in the Roman Empire."

¹⁴ Cf. Schaberg, "Luke," 368; O'Day, "Acts," 401.

¹⁵ Schaberg, "Luke," 368.

¹⁶ Ibid., 369.

¹⁷ O'Day, "Acts," 397.

¹⁸ Schaberg, "Luke," 369; O'Day, "Acts," 397. Against the notion that Luke is deliberately silencing women see Gaventa, "Whatever Happened to Those Prophesying Daughters?" 60. Gaventa argues that Luke is "So intent... on narrating God's history with these people, that his interest in the people as such is slight." Therefore, he does not even notice the women he supposedly deliberately silences any more than he notices that Peter simply disappears from his story without remark or that five of the seven selected at the beginning of chapter six are not commented on again. (My parallels of Schaberg and O'Day do not imply that they agree on all points. See Gaventa, "Whatever Happened to Those Prophesying Daughters?" 53.)

Luke-Acts is then sometimes aligned with the deuteropauline letters or sometimes treated as more ambiguous in its treatment of women's roles.¹⁹

My purpose thus far in portraying the major positions is to point out that to some extent both of the usual positions depend upon comparing Luke-Acts to external standards. Does Luke present women acting in ways that are within or outside of common cultural expectations? Or does Luke present women in leadership roles comparable to those Paul or other early Christians envisioned? These are important and complex issues. What I hope to do in the remainder of this essay is not to solve these problems, but to add another line of reasoning to the question at hand, one I believe is raised internally by the theology of Luke-Acts.

While working on my dissertation under Carl Holladay's supervision,²⁰ I came under the influence of Jacob Jervell's perspective on the study of Luke-Acts.²¹ Jervell rightly emphasizes Luke's pervasive interest in the fulfillment of OT prophecies concerning the restoration of the people of God. Luke's heavy emphasis on this theme can be seen throughout both volumes of his work, from the opening reference to "the events that *have been fulfilled* among us" in Luke 1:1 to the closing quotation of Isa 6:9–10 in Acts 28:26–27. The first two chapters of Luke set the tone for the reader by their Septuagintal style and their repeated highlighting of the fulfillment theme.²² For example, the angels tell Zechariah and Mary about the roles their sons will play in terms that allude to OT prophecies (1:14–17, 32–33), the songs of both Mary and Zechariah are montages of scriptural allusions and speak explicitly of God fulfilling his promises to Israel (1:40–55, 67–79), and Simeon and Anna prophesy concerning the fulfillment that they are

¹⁹ See Seim, "Searching for the Silver Coin," 35, who observes that Barbara Reid and many others make such connections—but who disagrees with this perspective. I have problems with the reduced Pauline corpus and therefore the egalitarian picture based on it—but that would be another project. For brief defenses of the authenticity of Colossians, Ephesians, and the Pastorals, see Luke Timothy Johnson, *The Writings of the New Testament: An Interpretation* (rev. ed.; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1999).

²⁰ Allen Black, "The Conversion Stories in the Acts of the Apostles: A Study of Their Forms and Functions" (Ph.D. diss., Emory University, 1985).

²¹ See especially the essays collected in Jacob Jervell, *Luke and the People of God: A New Look at Luke-Acts* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1972); and idem, *The Unknown Paul: Essays on Luke-Acts and Early Christian History* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1984).

²² Cf. Joel B. Green, *The Gospel of Luke* (NICNT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 51–58.

witnessing (2:29–32, 34–35, 38). In the closing chapter of Luke there are repeated references to Jesus explaining all that the “prophets have declared” concerning himself and what will soon happen in Jerusalem (24:25–27, 32, 44–49). And the first chapters of Acts are replete with references to the fulfillment of scripture and portray the beginnings of the promised restoration of Israel. Luke’s emphasis on prophetic fulfillment and Israel’s restoration is scattered throughout both volumes, as can easily be seen by perusing the Lukan quotations, allusions, and verbal parallels to prophetic texts listed in the UBSGNT⁴ indices. That Luke is immersed in the prophetic texts concerning the restoration of Israel is widely recognized in contemporary scholarship.²³

One might hope to find scholars exploiting this theme as a possible explanation for Luke’s interest in women and pairing of women and men. Jervell moves in this direction by looking to the restoration of Israel theme as an answer to why Luke emphasizes women in Luke-Acts.²⁴ But according to Jervell, Luke’s interest in women is not in women in general, but only in the “daughters of Abraham,” that is, Jewish women.²⁵ Luke knows that many Jewish women played a decisive role in the development of the church and he seeks to explain this theologically. Jervell calls attention to Luke 13:16. Jesus can heal this crippled woman on the Sabbath because she is a “Daughter of Abraham.” According to Jervell, nearly all the women mentioned in Luke-Acts are daughters of Abraham. Luke emphasizes not their social role—they maintain a role of subordination to the men—but their Jewishness. For Luke, “women are simply daughters of Abraham, devout Jewesses, who have found their proper place in the church.”²⁶ Thus for Luke the emphasis on women is part of the theme of the restoration of Israel.

²³ Walter Eichrodt, *Die Hoffnung des ewigen Friedens im alten Israel* (BFCT 25, 3; Gütersloh: Bertelsmann, 1920), 101–8, 114–17, is cited by Parker as the first to see this theme in Acts (James Parker, III, *The Concept of Apokatastasis in Acts: A Study in Primitive Christian Theology* [Austin: Schola Press, 1978], 62). For more recent explications of this theme see David Ravens, *Luke and the Restoration of Israel* (JSNTSup 119; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1995); Johnson, *The Writings of the New Testament*, 197–243; Carl R. Holladay, *A Critical Introduction to the New Testament: Interpreting the Message and Meaning of Jesus Christ* (Nashville: Abingdon, 2005), 241–43; Michael F. Fuller, *The Restoration of Israel: Israel’s Re-gathering and the Fate of the Nations in Early Jewish Literature and Luke-Acts* (BZNW 138; Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2006).

²⁴ Jacob Jervell, “The Daughters of Abraham: Women in Acts,” in *The Unknown Paul*, 146–57.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 147.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 157.

But Jervell's interpretation depends on labeling every woman mentioned in Luke-Acts as Jewish or at least a God-fearer.²⁷ He argues that "'pure' Gentile women are absent...provided they are not to be reckoned among those in the reports of conversions in Acts 11:21, 24 and 18:8."²⁸ But why would one suppose they are absent in these reports—that there were no women to be reckoned with among the converts at Antioch and outside the synagogue at Corinth? And what about Damaris the Areopagite (Acts 17:34)? Jervell relegates her to a footnote.²⁹

Contrary to Jervell, it is not necessary to downplay the participation of Gentile women in Acts. As is clear in Acts 15:13–18 and elsewhere in Luke-Acts, the inclusion of Gentiles—presumably women as well as men—in the restored people of God was also a matter of prophecy.³⁰

However, there is a passage in Acts in which Luke quotes a prophetic text that provides a clue to his pairings of women and men: the Joel quotation in Peter's Pentecost sermon. This quotation is particularly important because of the programmatic nature of Acts 2 with its heavy emphasis on the restoration theme.³¹ The Pentecost story is permeated with features of the hope of the restoration of Israel, including the restoration of the Davidic dynasty, the outpouring of the Spirit, the proclamation of forgiveness and repentance, the acceptance of this message by thousands of devout Jews gathered in Jerusalem from all the nations of the world, the inclusion of the nations in the mission of the restored Israel, and the idyllic communal existence of the restored community.³²

In Peter's sermon (Acts 2:16–18, 21) he proclaims:

No, this is what was spoken through the prophet Joel: "In the last days it will be, God declares, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh,

²⁷ Ibid., 148–150.

²⁸ Ibid., 149.

²⁹ Ibid., 149, 188 n. 30.

³⁰ On the inclusion of the Gentiles see Jervell, "The Divided People of God: The Restoration of Israel and Salvation for the Gentiles," in *Luke and the People of God*, 41–74; Joseph F. Fitzmyer, *The Gospel according to Luke* (2 vols.; AB 28–28A; Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1981–1985), 1:187–92.

³¹ In addition to the sources in note 23, see David L. Tiede, "Acts 2:1–47," *Int* 33 (1979): 62–67.

³² Black, "Conversion Stories," 109–16; David W. Pao, *Acts and the Isaianic New Exodus* (Biblical Studies Library; Grand Rapids: Baker, 2002), 122–39.

and *your sons and your daughters* will prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams. Even upon my slaves, *both men and women*, in those days I will pour out my Spirit; and they shall prophesy... Then everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved."

Peter's quotation from Joel 2 is more than an explanation of the speaking in tongues of Acts 2:1–15: It is an announcement that "the last days" have begun. In particular, it interprets the outpouring of the Spirit as a prophetic fulfillment and announces the availability of salvation to all who call on the name of the Lord.

In this context the prophecy uses men-women pairings twice (as italicized, "*your sons and your daughters*" and "slaves, *both men and women*"). Jervell rightly draws connections between these pairings and the prophesying of Philip's daughters in Acts 21:9 and even the prophesying of Mary, Elizabeth, and Anna in Luke 1–2.³³ But the Joel prophecy is not only about both men and women prophesying (having visions, or dreaming), but also about both women and men participating in the pouring out of the Spirit and in the salvation of everyone who calls on the name of the Lord. It is not only the women prophets in Luke-Acts who help to fulfill this prophecy; it is all the women who receive the Spirit and the promised salvation. Joel's prophecy highlights the participation of both men and women in the events of the last days, the events that are the focus of Luke-Acts.

It is correct to see the Joel prophecy as a theological background for Luke's interest in women prophesying in Luke-Acts, but it falls short. By extending the quotation to include "Then everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved" (Joel 2:32), Luke indicates that the inclusive "your sons and your daughters" and "my slaves, both men and women" pertain not only to who will prophesy, see visions, and dream dreams, but also to who will call upon the Lord and be saved.

A number of other texts would seem to relate clearly to this prophecy: "Yet more than ever believers were added to the Lord, great numbers of *both men and women*" (Acts 5:14); "But when they believed Phillip, ... they were baptized, *both men and women*" (8:12); "Many of them therefore believed, including not a few Greek *women and men* of high standing" (17:12; cf. 17:4). The prophecy would also include specific named instances of salvation coming to both women and men such

³³ Jervell, "Daughters of Abraham," 154–55.

as the pairings of Dionysius and Damaris (Acts 17:34) and Lydia and the Philippian jailor (Acts 16).

In applying Joel's prophecy to Mary and Anna, Jervell rightly suggests that for Luke the prophecy is not limited to the events of Pentecost and after. But the pre-Pentecost fulfillments of Joel 2 should not be limited to women prophesying. Luke would presumably see the woman with the hemorrhage as one who by touching Jesus' garment called upon his name and was saved.³⁴ Several of the texts in Luke that deal with women or women paired with men could be viewed as cases of God bringing physical or spiritual salvation to both his male and female servants.

A number of pairings, such as those that are a part of Jesus' teaching (for example, the Man Who Sowed Seed in Luke 13:18–19 and the Woman Who Hid Yeast in Luke 13:20–21), are not explained by the notion of fulfillment of prophecy. But the Joel 2 prophecy does provide an explicitly Lukan explanation for many of the pairings. The idea that the new age would involve God pouring out his Spirit and grace upon both men and women could have theological value for explaining all of the aforementioned material from Acts plus the following pairings in Luke:

Mary (1:26–38, 46–56)	Zechariah (1:5–23, 67–79)
Anna (2:36–38)	Simeon (2:25–35)
Widow at Nain's Son (7:11–17)	Jairus' Daughter (8:40–42a, 49–56)
Women who Accompany Jesus (8:1–3)	The Twelve (6:12–16)
Jairus' Daughter (8:40–42a, 49–56)	Woman with Hemorrhage (8:42b–48)
Woman Healed on Sabbath (13:10–17)	Man Healed on Sabbath (14:1–6)
Abraham's Daughter (13:16)	Abraham's Son (19:9)
Women at Tomb (24:1–11)	Peter at Tomb (24:12)

In addition to Joel, Isaiah also sheds light on the issue at hand. Luke-Acts relies heavily upon Isaiah, especially chapters 40–66.³⁵ The specific citations include:

³⁴ Luke 8:48 uses *σέσωκέν*.

³⁵ See Holladay, *Introduction*, 241; Mark L. Strauss, *The Davidic Messiah in Luke-Acts: The Promise and its Fulfillment in Lukan Christology* (JSNTSup 110; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1995), 285–336; Pao, *Acts and the Isaianic New Exodus*; Bart J. Koet, "Isaiah in Luke-Acts," in *Isaiah in the New Testament* (ed. Steve Moyise and Maarten J. J. Menken; London: T & T Clark, 2005), 79–100.

- Luke 3:4–6 cites Isa 40:3–5 (concerning John's preparation for Jesus and the coming salvation of all flesh)
 Luke 4:18–19 cites Isa 62:1–2 (concerning Jesus being anointed by the Spirit to proclaim good news, lift up the downtrodden, and proclaim the year of the Lord's favor)
 Luke 19:46 cites Isa 56:7 (concerning the house of God)
 Luke 22:37 cites Isa 53:12 (concerning Jesus' death)
 Acts 7:48–49 cites Isa 66:1–2a (concerning the temple)
 Acts 8:32–33 cites Isa 53:7–8 (concerning Jesus' death)
 Acts 13:47 cites Isa 49:6 (concerning Paul's ministry to the Gentiles; alluded to in Luke 1:79 and Acts 1:8)
 Acts 28:25–27 cites Isa 6:9–10 (concerning the Jews rejecting the Gospel).³⁶

In each of these cases Luke demonstrates how the story of Jesus and the early church fulfills the prophetic expectation.

Beyond these eight citations, the "Index of Allusions and Verbal Parallels" in UBSGNT⁴ identifies forty-three passages in Luke-Acts that allude to Isa 40–66. A few of the many items in Luke-Acts that are connected by allusion to the prophecies in Isa 40–66 include: the redemption of Jerusalem (Isa 52:9; Luke 2:38); Israel grieving the Spirit of God (Isa 63:10; Acts 7:51); the trampling of Jerusalem (Isa 63:18; Luke 21:24); and a place for eunuchs in the people of God (Isa 56:3–5; Acts 8:26–40).³⁷

Luke uses this section of Isaiah primarily because of its focus on the restoration of the nation of Israel.³⁸ In this light Isaiah's repeated references to God's future blessings on His *sons* and His *daughters* is an appropriate theological background to Luke's interest in balancing women and men in his two-volume work.³⁹ Three texts from Isaiah are especially pertinent:

I will say to the north, "Give them up," and to the south, "Do not withhold; bring *my sons* from far away *and my daughters* from the end of the

³⁶ See Koet's treatment of these quotations, "Isaiah in Luke-Acts," 81–97; cf. Pao, *Acts and the Isaianic New Exodus*, 47–48, 70–84, 96–109.

³⁷ Cf. James A. Sanders, "Isaiah in Luke," *Int* 36 (1982): 144–55; Darrell L. Bock, *Proclamation from Prophecy and Pattern: Lucan Old Testament Christology* (JSNTSup 12; Sheffield: JSOT, 1987), passim; Thomas B. Moore, "'To the End of the Earth': The Geographical and Ethnic Universalism of Acts 1:8 in Light of Isaianic Influence on Luke," *JETS* 40 (1997): 392.

³⁸ See especially Pao, *Acts and the Isaianic New Exodus*.

³⁹ Richard Oster first alerted me to these texts in Isaiah and their importance for the role of women in Luke-Acts.

earth—everyone who is called by my name, whom I created for my glory, whom I formed and made.” (Isa 43:6–7)

Thus says the Lord God: I will soon lift up my hand to the nations, and raise my signal to the peoples; and they shall bring *your sons* in their bosom, and *your daughters* shall be carried on their shoulders. (Isa 49:22)

Lift up your eyes and look around; they all gather together, they come to you; *your sons* shall come from far away, and *your daughters* shall be carried on their nurses’ arms. (Isa 60:4)

These texts relate to the theme in Isa 40–66 that interests Luke the most—the return from exile as part of Israel’s restoration. Koet argues that in Luke’s reading of Isaiah he “not only knows the quotations, he also takes into account their contexts (at least to some extent), that some passages of Isaiah are more crucial than others, and that some of the ideas in Isaiah are adopted as a blueprint for his work.”⁴⁰ Each of these points seems to have merit for considering the sons and daughters texts of Isaiah. All three of these texts are found in contexts with which Luke was clearly familiar. For Isa 43:6–7 and 60:4 there are allusions elsewhere in Acts that indicate Luke was aware of the verses immediately adjacent to the “sons and daughters” text. Acts 18:9–10 alludes to the verse immediately preceding Isa 43:6–7 (Isa 43:5), and Luke 1:78–79 alludes to Isa 60:1–2, just before Isa 60:4. With reference to the sons and daughters text in Isa 49:22, Luke used another text from the same context: Acts 13:47 cites Isa 49:6 and Acts 26:23 alludes to the same text. All of these sons and daughters texts are directly referring to the return from exile theme that is of interest to Luke in his use of this section of Isaiah. These three texts also resonate with the gender language of the first part of the Joel 2 quotation: They speak of the men and women of Israel as God’s “sons and daughters.” It therefore seems probable that these verses are part of the unseen substructure of Lukan theology, what Koet calls part of the blueprint of his work.

It is fitting here to note how the three sons and daughters texts of Isaiah fit with some of the other texts from Isaiah chosen by Luke to emphasize the inclusiveness of the promised salvation. In Luke 3:4–6 Luke expands Mark and Matthew’s citation of Isa 40:3 concerning John the Baptist to include Isa 40:3–5. The addition now includes “and all flesh shall see the glory of God” (Luke 3:6 = Isa 40:5). In Luke 4:18–19 Jesus reads from Isa 61:1–2 at the synagogue at Nazareth:

⁴⁰ Koet, “Isaiah in Luke-Acts,” 79.

“he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free” (Luke 4:18 = Isa 61:1; cf. Luke 7:22). In Acts 13:47 Paul explains his turn to the Gentiles with a citation from Isaiah: “For so the Lord has commanded us, saying, ‘I have set you to be a light for the Gentiles, so that you may bring salvation to the ends of the earth’” (= Isa 49:6). These texts show that one of the aspects that drew Luke’s attention to Isaiah was inclusiveness. That the sons and daughters texts deal with Israel’s restoration, with inclusiveness, and are in contexts that Luke was certainly familiar with are all factors favoring the importance of these texts in his theology.

The results of scholarly efforts to understand the pairing of women and men in Luke-Acts have been basically two-dimensional, namely, the dimension of sociological perspectives or the dimension of the hermeneutic of suspicion. There is a third dimension that has been overlooked: that is, interpreting Luke’s pairing of men and women in the context of his own explicit theological agenda. Prophetic texts (Joel 2:28–29; Isa 43:6–7; 49:22; 60:4, in particular) have been repeatedly overlooked in discussions of the pairing of women and men in Luke-Acts. This third dimension gives rightful priority to Luke’s own intention, a priority often ignored by studies that rely too heavily upon sociological models built from external information about women and men in ancient societies, or upon a hermeneutic of suspicion. Given Luke’s significant interest in the fulfillment of the prophecies concerning the restoration of the people of God, there is a theological rationale here for much of his interest in pairing women and men. It is difficult to avoid the conclusion that Isaiah and Joel provide an essential third dimension for the scholarly interpretation of Luke-Acts. Building upon the prior recognition of Luke’s recurring use of the OT, here again we recognize that Luke wants to show that God has fulfilled his promises. By means of his two-volume work Luke demonstrates that both men and women experience the fullness of God’s promises as found in Israel’s prophets. God’s sons *and* daughters are healed, hear Jesus’ teaching, become disciples, receive the Spirit, prophesy, and receive salvation.

THE CITATION OF SCRIPTURE AS A KEY TO CHARACTERIZATION IN ACTS

Gail R. O'Day

In this essay, I bring together two rich methods of inquiry in Luke-Acts studies—intertextuality, in particular the way Acts uses Scripture, and literary studies of characterization. These two methods of inquiry have largely remained discrete areas of study for Acts, even though they both take as their primary textual data the same material, the speeches in Acts. Intertextual studies of the speeches tend to focus on the scriptural antecedents that lie behind Luke's use of Scripture, identifying the particular scriptural verses that are quoted or echoed and categorizing the variations that Luke works on the text of the LXX, or on the methods and modes of scriptural interpretation that the use of Scripture reveals.¹ Character studies, and literary studies more generally, focus on the speeches for their rhetorical function in Acts, the ways they move the plot and advance the book's main theological themes, and what the speeches show about Luke's attitude toward his characters.²

¹ See, for example, Martin Rese, "Die Funktion der alttestamentlichen Zitate und Anspielungen in den Reden der Apostelgeschichte," in *Les Actes des Apôtres. Traditions, rédaction, théologie* (ed. J. Kremer; Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1979), 61–79; Craig A. Evans and James A. Sanders, *Luke and Scripture: The Function of Sacred Tradition in Luke-Acts* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1993); Craig A. Kimball, *Jesus' Exposition of the Old Testament in Luke-Acts* (JSNTSS 94; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1994); Robert L. Brawley, *Text to Text Pours Forth Speech: Voices of Scripture in Luke-Acts* (Indiana Studies in Biblical Literature; Bloomington: Indiana University, 1995); Gert J. Steyn, *Septuagint Quotations in the Context of Petrine and Pauline Speeches of the Acta Apostolorum* (Contributions to Biblical Exegesis and Theology 12; Kampen: Pharos, 1995); Luke Timothy Johnson, *Septuagintal Midrash in the Speeches of Acts* (The Pere Marquette Lecture in Theology 2002; Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 2002).

² See, for example, Luke Timothy Johnson, *The Literary Function of Possessions in Luke-Acts* (SBLDS 39; Missoula: Scholars Press, 1979); Robert C. Tannehill, *The Narrative Unity of Luke-Acts: A Literary Interpretation, Vol. 2, The Acts of the Apostles* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1986); David B. Gowler, *Host, Guest, Enemy, and Friend: Portraits of the Pharisees in Luke and Acts* (Emory Studies in Early Christianity 2; New York: Peter Lang, 1991); John A. Darr, *On Character Building: The Reader and the Rhetoric of Characterization in Luke-Acts* (Literary Currents in Biblical Interpretation; Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1992); William S. Kurz, *Reading Luke-Acts: Dynamics of Biblical Narrative* (Louisville, Westminster John Knox, 1993); William H. Shepherd, Jr., *The Narrative Function of the Holy Spirit as a Character in Luke-Acts* (SBLDS 147; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1994). The place of the

But there is no sustained two-way conversation between these two approaches.

This omission is all the more striking and curious since all the direct citations of Scripture in Acts occur only in the words of characters and not in the narrative commentary. Luke as narrator never cites Scripture directly; he places all the explicit scriptural interpretation in the mouths of his characters.³ Yet oddly, studies of characterization do not explicitly engage intertextuality as a mode of characterization. And studies of intertextuality tend to be content to note that Luke interprets Scripture in his use of it in his speeches. Luke Johnson, for example, begins his very helpful essay on "Septuagintal Midrash in the Speeches of Acts," by noting that "In his Gospel, Luke consistently interprets [Scripture] through the speech of his characters, a practice he continues even more elaborately in his second volume."⁴ It is axiomatic for Johnson, as it is for most other interpreters of the use of Scripture in Luke's speeches, that the scriptural interpretation that one finds in the speeches in Acts is Luke's own, that "the various characters who interpret Scripture are interpreting for Luke, wearing the various masks that he assigns them."⁵

Johnson's observation is an excellent starting point, but I want to suggest an additional step in understanding the relationship between citation of Scripture and characterization in Acts. For example, the use of Scripture in Peter's early speeches in Acts is regularly pointed to as showing the prophetic character of Scripture or the power of the Holy Spirit or the risen Jesus as the hermeneutical lens and guide for the interpretation of Scripture in the early church.⁶ Yet because

speeches in Acts is another full area of study unto itself; see, for example, E. Plumacher, *Lukas als hellenistischer Schriftsteller: Studien zur Apostelgeschichte* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1972); Marion L. Soards, "The Speeches in Acts in Relation to Other Pertinent Ancient Literature," *ETL* 70 (1994): 65–90, and *The Speeches in Acts: Their Content, Context, and Concerns* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1994). In an excursus (pp. 73–75) in "The Speeches in Acts," Soards hints at the role of speeches in characterization, but his focus remains on speeches in general with no special attention to the place of Scripture citation.

³ The one exception is Luke 3:4–5, in which, following tradition, a direct citation of Isa 40:3–5 is used by the narrator to describe the activity of John the Baptist (see also Mark 1:2–3 and Matt 3:3). Interestingly, John places the Isa 40 citation directly in the mouth of John the Baptist (John 1:23).

⁴ Johnson, *Septuagintal Midrash*, 13.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 47.

⁶ For Acts 2 as an indication of the prophetic character of Scripture, see Craig A. Evans, "The Prophetic Setting of the Pentecost Sermon," *JNW* 74 (1983) 148–150;

the emphasis regularly falls on what this usage says about the Lukan scriptural hermeneutic or how Scripture functions to shape the plot or ideological perspective of Acts, Peter as the speaker of this interpretation of Scripture almost disappears from view. Peter speaks with Luke's voice and from behind Luke's mask. The level of character analysis seems to assume that the different speakers are interchangeable—there is nothing to be learned about Peter as a character in Acts from the way he cites Scripture, because what matters is the place of Scripture citation in the rhetorical whole of Acts. Yet such readings of the role of Scripture citation in Acts' speeches do not seem to convey the full picture. Luke does interpret *Scripture* through his characters, but it is also important to investigate whether Luke also interprets his *characters* through his use of Scripture.

SETTING THE PROBLEM

There are many reasons why this question falls outside the focus of both intertextual and character studies. It is a commonplace in Luke-Acts studies to say that Luke is not interested in characters per se in Acts, that for him characters are types with little or no individual personality.⁷ This commonplace is based on a dominant view in late twentieth-century literary criticism, that characters in ancient literature can be distinguished from characters in modern literature by the lack of interest in personality in antiquity. Characters in antiquity may be types of moral virtue, allegorical wisdom, aids to the advancement of the plot, but not fully rounded individuals. By comparison with modern literature and post-Freudian notions of the construction of the self, characters in ancient literature were regularly regarded as “flat” or static.⁸

as a hermeneutical lens, see Brawley, *From Text to Text*, 75–90; for the role of the Holy Spirit, see Shepherd, *Narrative Function*, 159–67.

⁷ E.g., Beverly Roberts Gaventa, *Acts* (ANTC; Nashville: Abingdon, 2003), 27 (“The human characters who inhabit the story—many and intriguing though they may be—are subsidiary to the larger story of divine activity. Luke presents and assesses these human characters in relationship to their place in and reception of the larger story of God. What makes human characters interesting or important for Luke pertains to their response or resistance to God.”).

⁸ The classic formulation of the distinction between “round” and “flat” characters is E. M. Forster, *Aspects of the Novel* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, & World, 1927). Many of the works cited in n. 2 above (e.g., Darr and Shepherd) review the critique of Forster's distinctions, yet the notion of biblical characters as “flat” nonetheless still holds much sway. For an excellent review of the issues that have shaped study of characterization

Yet this perspective on character has increasingly come under scrutiny, in classics, literary theory, and to some degree, biblical studies, for a variety of reasons. First, this perspective unhelpfully equates individuality with personality. While one might be able to argue that the display of personality in literary characters is a modern psychological construct, it is certainly not the case that concern with the individual and individuality is a modern construct. Ancient literature and art was concerned with individual character traits, individual figures, and the individual person as distinct from the masses.⁹ The ancient rhetorical practice of *προσωποποιία*, the creation of speeches appropriate for the speaker and for the subject and occasion, assumes that one can identify distinctive traits of individual persons.¹⁰ Yet, interestingly, even most Acts studies that focus on the practice of *προσωποποιία* investigate what it teaches about Luke as a rhetorician, not what it yields for characterization.¹¹

Second, this perspective also confuses personality and character. Ancient literature was concerned with character and with the development of character, even with the change and growth of character, but not with personality in the modern sense.¹² When the narrator reports in Acts 4:13 that the council “saw the boldness [*παρρησία*] of Peter and John,” the narrator is naming an explicit character trait and the

in NT narrative, see Fred W. Burnett, “Characterization and Reader Construction of Characters in the Gospels,” *Semeia* 63 (1993): 3–28. For critiques of the assumption that characters in ancient literature are “types,” see Christopher Gill, “The Question of Character Development: Plutarch and Tacitus,” *CQ* 33 (1983): 469–87, and the collection of essays edited by Christopher Pelling, *Characterization and Individuality in Greek Literature* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1990).

⁹ See Simon Goldhill, “Character and Action, Representation and Reading,” 100–127, in Pelling, *Characterization and Individuality in Greek Literature*.

¹⁰ See, for example, George A. Kennedy, *New Testament Interpretation through Rhetorical Criticism* (Chapel Hill and London: University of North Carolina Press, 1984), ch. 6, “The Speeches in Acts,” esp. pp. 114–16; Earle Hilgert, “Speeches in Acts and Hellenistic Canons of Historiography and Rhetoric,” in *Good News in History: Essays in Honor of Bo Reicke* (ed. L. Miller; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1993), 83–109; William S. Kurz, “Hellenistic Rhetoric in the Christological Proof of Luke-Acts,” *CBQ* 42 (1980): 186; idem., *Reading Luke-Acts*.

¹¹ A significant exception is the work of Kurz, *Reading Luke-Acts*, and “Effects of Variant Narrators in Acts 10–11,” *NTS* 43 (1997): 570–86.

¹² See Christopher Gill, “The Character-Personality Distinction,” 1–31, and Stephen Halliwell, “Traditional Greek Conceptions of Character,” 32–59 in Pelling, *Character and Individuality*.

reader is led to ask, “On what grounds can the council know this?”¹³ How has Luke encoded his story to reveal this character trait? To say that Peter and John have boldness as a mark of their character is not the same thing as saying that we know something about their personalities. But similarly, it is not accurate to say that Luke has no interest in what distinguishes Peter as an individual.

Third, this perspective conflates what is rhetorical with what might be called psychological. To speak of characters in any literary work, ancient or modern, is never to speak of persons, even if the character in question, as is the case in Acts, is based on a historical personage. Literary works have characters, not persons; the world has persons, but not characters. To read characters as if they were persons robs the literary character of its function and distinctive voice in its literary home. As Mary Doyle Springer wrote suggestively some time ago in *A Rhetoric of Literary Character*,

Certainly it is impossible to deny to readers any pleasure they may take in expanding character beyond its role in the literary work—in looking up from the page and pondering how the woman on the page is like the woman reading, and so on to inspired conjectures about what to do and how to live . . . All I ask is that such a reader admit that she has looked up and away from the story, and made use of it for something other than what it intrinsically is—that she has created her own illusion.¹⁴

This is not to argue for pure formalism in the approach to literary character. How a character is drawn depends on cultural conventions and data that extend beyond the words on the page, as does the reader’s ability to decipher the construction of that character. It is, however, to suggest that unless characters are read rhetorically, we will find them lacking in something that they were never intended to have, personality, for example, because we want them to be persons, not characters.

Clarity about the rhetorical function and construction of character opens the door to a deeper understanding of the characters in an ancient work by creating a space for conversation about individuality and character development that is not dependent on modern notions

¹³ For an overview of “boldness” or “frankness” as a character trait in the first century, see John T. Fitzgerald, ed., *Friendship, Flattery, and Frankness of Speech* (New York: Brill, 1995).

¹⁴ Mary Doyle Springer, *A Rhetoric of Literary Character: Some Women of Henry James* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1978), 20.

of personality.¹⁵ This clarity also highlights that a character's role in advancing the plot does not make that character a mere foil of the author or narrator.¹⁶ Peter, for example, is essential to the advancement of the plot of Acts in the book's first half. His role, shaped by words and deeds, is key to understanding Acts and to understanding Peter as an individual character. Peter is not interchangeable with any of a number of apostles in Acts; there is something distinctive about Peter's contributions to the plot and the character of Peter that the story constructs. His contribution to the advancement of the plot does not reduce Peter to a type.¹⁷ Rather, the reader learns more about Peter "than is necessary for the plot,"¹⁸ and so Peter as a distinct individual can be identified in the text.

From this perspective, it seems both fair and necessary to ask about characters' direct citation of Scripture in a more differentiated way. If one looks at Scripture citations only as Luke's voice (even if masked), and not as the character's voice, one misses gradations in the development of both character and plot in Acts. One also overlooks a dimension of Luke-Acts' intertextuality, because citation of Scripture is not simply about scriptural hermeneutics, but about the building of character. I would like to examine these two interlocking perspectives by looking at the early speeches of Peter in Acts.

ACTS 1

In his first speech in Acts (1:15–22), Peter speaks as one with authority. Most commentaries on this text simply assert Peter's leadership,¹⁹ yet the transformation in the depiction of the character of Peter from

¹⁵ This is the starting point for the two articles by Christopher Gill, "The Question of Character Development" and "The Character-Personality Distinction" (see nn. 8 and 12 above).

¹⁶ See, e.g., Gaventa, *Acts*, 69: "By contemporary standards, Peter is a central character, even though in Acts Luke demonstrates little interest in depicting his human characters as individuals or as independent agents."

¹⁷ Burnett makes this case for Peter's character in Matthew; see "Characterization and Reader Construction of Characters," 20–23.

¹⁸ This phrase is from Adele Berlin, *Poetics and Interpretation of Biblical Narrative* (Sheffield: Almond Press, 1983), 32. Cited in Burnett, "Characterization and Reader Construction of Characters," 16.

¹⁹ So Luke Timothy Johnson, *The Acts of the Apostles* (SP 5; Collegeville, MN: Liturgical, 1992), 38; Johnson, *Literary Function*, 177; Gaventa, *Acts*, 69; Shepherd, *Narrative Function of the Holy Spirit as Character*, 157–58.

the ending of Luke to the beginning of Acts is really quite staggering. Readers, both ancient and modern, bring what they know about Peter to a reading of Luke and Acts, and so the reader anticipates a leadership role for Peter in Acts. George Kennedy, in his rhetorical-critical reading of Peter's first speech, maintains that this extra-textual knowledge explains the leadership role that Luke assigns Peter: "Given the knowledge that it was Peter who took a leadership role among the disciples and given a desire to dramatize an important event by *προσωποποιία*, Luke has created a predictable result."²⁰ But the reader's extra-textual knowledge does not sufficiently explain the character that Luke creates for Peter in Acts 1. How does the Acts narrative move Peter into a position of authority?

In John, by contrast, this question of Peter's move from denial to authority is quite simple to answer. The denial is not the last time Peter appears in the Gospel story, because Peter is the most prominent character in John 21. Simon Peter is at the center of the fishing story in 21:1–14—the one who leads the other disciples fishing (v. 3), the one who rushes headlong into the sea to reach the risen Jesus (v. 7), and the one who hauls ashore the miraculous catch of 153 fish (v. 11). By his actions, Peter emerges as a leader. Peter's repositioning as leader is not simply to advance the plot; this repositioning also tells the reader something about Peter.²¹

Peter's rebirth as a leader continues in the rest of John 21. The well-known and much discussed dialogue between Peter and Jesus about loving Jesus and tending sheep (vv. 15–17) culminates with a prophecy about Peter's martyrdom that seals Peter's love for Jesus and for Jesus' own (vv. 18–20). Just as Jesus loved his own until the end, Peter will too. Peter's character as leader is constructed through his own actions and words and through Jesus' prediction about his deeds.

One might have expected a similar rehabilitation scene in Luke, but there is none. Jesus' prediction of Peter's denial in Luke 22:31–34 contains hints of a rehabilitation,²² but the final picture of Peter in Luke

²⁰ Kennedy, *New Testament Interpretation*, 116.

²¹ Paul S. Minear, "The Original Functions of John 21," *JBL* (1983): 91–98, argues that filling in details about the characters of Peter and the Beloved Disciple is one of the purposes of John 21 and one of the reasons this chapter should be read as an integral part of the Gospel. See similar arguments in Gail R. O'Day, *John: Introduction, Commentary, and Reflections*, *NIB* IX (Nashville: Abingdon, 1995), 854–55.

²² See commentaries, e.g., Gaventa, *Acts*, 69 ("Peter emerges as the spokesman, fulfilling Jesus' admonition in Luke 22:32.")

is one of failure. The denial scene is the last time that Peter appears as a character in Luke. The tradition of a resurrection appearance to Simon is reported in 24:34, but Peter himself does not appear in any resurrection stories (contrast this with John 20:1–10, where Peter and the beloved disciple witness the empty tomb). Peter is not one of the disciples on the road to Emmaus, a scene that parallels the breakfast scene in John 21.

In his first appearance in Acts 1:13, Peter is still one among many named disciples in the upper room. Peter is named first, but the ὁ τε/καί construction (ὁ τε Πέτρος καὶ Ἰωάννης καὶ...) makes clear that Peter is one of a group. Peter's first appearance is not as a leader. His speech in Acts 1 defines Peter as a leader and begins his move into authority. My suggestion is that this movement—and hence Peter's character as leader—is shaped and controlled by his citation of Scripture.

Acts 1:16 reports the first words that Peter has spoken since the words of denial. Those words, “Friends (ἄνδρες ἀδελφοί), the Scripture had to be fulfilled, which the Holy Spirit through David foretold concerning Judas...,” position Peter as the authoritative interpreter of Scripture and through Scripture, of the community's own history. Peter does not address the community on the basis of his own authority or his position; rather, his interpretation of Scripture gives Peter his authority.²³

The Scripture to which Peter refers are two LXX Psalms citations, Ps 68:26 and Ps 108:8. The centrality of the citation of two LXX Psalm verses for the structure and content of Peter's first speech is well-known:

- vv. 16–19 The death of Judas as fulfillment of Scripture
- v. 20a–c The citation of Scripture (LXX Ps 68:26)
- v. 20d The citation of Scripture (LXX Ps 108:8)
- vv. 21–22 The replacement of Judas

This short speech is meticulously balanced and written in a chiasmic structure that places the two direct citations of the Psalms at the center of Peter's words.²⁴

Verses 16–19 are the first time that the readers of Luke-Acts have learned about Judas's fate. Importantly, Luke positions Peter as the

²³ This is the move that is missing in most analyses of this episode. Peter is noted as the authoritative interpreter of Scripture (e.g., Shepherd, Brawley), but Peter's dependence on the authorizing voice of Scripture for his own authority is not noted.

²⁴ Brawley, *Text to Text*, 63–64; Steyn, *Septuagint Quotations*, 38–63.

one who reports on Judas's fate, but it is Judas's fate as the fulfillment of Scripture that is Peter's sole concern. The specific details of Judas's death are presented as a narrative aside in vv. 18–19, and the distinction between what is located in Peter's speech and what is located in narrative commentary is important. The vivid details of Judas's fate, with their own possible intertextual echoes,²⁵ belong to the purview of the narrator, not Peter. The singular focus of Peter's speech is the fulfillment of Scripture in the community's story. Peter is not presented as the chronicler of the community's past—that role in this section is left to the narrator—but as its faithful interpreter.

Here, then, we see one of the first examples of what the citation of Scripture contributes to the characterization of Peter in Acts. The last time Peter had spoken in Luke-Acts, one could hardly call him a faithful interpreter of the community's past. At the fire in the courtyard, with Jesus as a witness (Luke 22:61), Peter said, "Man, I do not know what you are talking about" (Luke 22:60). In Acts, by contrast, Peter is now shown to be a reliable witness to the past because his witness is backed up by the words of Scripture. Peter's words about the past in vv. 16–17 are tightly controlled: he reports only on what can be verified by the story recounted in Luke (Judas was a guide to those who arrested Jesus [Luke 22:47], Judas was one of the original disciples [Luke 22:3]). The extra-textual material about the death of Judas is left to the narrator. The narrator's tight control of what Peter says suggests that Peter has to work his way into the community's trust. He cannot offer testimony beyond what each and every reader can verify from the story of Luke itself. Peter is shown to be a reliable commentator through this technique. His reliability is not simply a narrative given, but is encoded into the way the story is told.

What Peter can and does offer beyond what the reader already knows is the witness of Scripture. Even here, however, Peter's words are tightly controlled. In this short speech, Peter uses two formulaic expressions to speak of the witness of Scripture: "the Scripture had to (ἔδει) be fulfilled" (v. 16) and "for it is written (γέγραπται) in the book of Psalms" (v. 20). The use of these two formulae reinforces that it is the authority of Scripture (note also the elaboration, "which the Holy Spirit through David foretold") that authorizes Peter's interpretation.

²⁵ Brawley, *Text to Text*, 68–71.

Peter draws his authority from the witness of Scripture, not the other way around.

The establishment of Peter as a reliable witness, a reliable interpreter of Scripture, and as one whose speech is shaped by the authority of Scripture is key for the moves of the second half of the speech. The formula "for it is written in the book of Psalms" introduces two citations of Scripture that are differentiated from one another only by the simple connective *καί*. This *καί* communicates that Peter understands the two citations as part of an interrelated fulfillment of prophecy. The first psalm quotation, LXX Ps 68:26, is positioned to interpret the death of Judas as the fulfillment of the words of David. This use of Scripture fits a typical prophecy-fulfillment pattern: an event of the community's past is given meaning by viewing it through the lens of Scripture.

The second citation of LXX Ps 108:8 does not point to the community's past, however, but to its future. The understated *καί* actually marks a significant turn in the way Scripture is cited in this speech and in Peter's role as the community's leader. Peter uses the citation of LXX Ps 108:8 to establish the need to secure a replacement for Judas. After he quotes the Psalm verse, Peter then prefaces his words about the securing of a successor with the same verb of necessity that he used earlier to indicate the fulfillment of prophecy in Judas's death, *δεῖ* (vv. 16, 21). Just as the community's past fulfilled Scripture, so now must its present.

Peter's words in vv. 21–22 about the need to replace Judas and the qualifications of the successor are Peter's first exercise of leadership with this fledgling community. Importantly, the authority for Peter's act of leadership is clearly positioned as deriving from the authority of Scripture. The need to replace Judas is not simply Peter's decision; Peter is interpreting the divine necessity (*δεῖ*) imposed by the words of Scripture. Verses 16–20c have shown that Peter is a reliable interpreter of the place of Scripture in the community's past, and vv. 20d–23 show that he can also be a reliable interpreter of the place of Scripture for the community's present and future. The dual citations of Scripture in v. 20 are the determining point in the development of Peter's character as authority and leader. Peter's portrait is tightly controlled by the narrator; the chiasmic structure of his speech allows no room for chance.

This analysis of the structure and function of Acts 1:15–23 suggests that a commonplace about Peter in Acts, that there is no transition from his role in the Gospel, that he simply emerges as the church's leader, oversimplifies the textual data. In the opening episode in Acts,

Luke very carefully sets up Peter as a leader of the community. The one hundred and twenty people of Acts 1:15, as well as the reader of Acts, are not asked simply to accept Peter as leader. Rather, Luke uses the citations of Scripture in Peter's speech to show that Peter can be trusted as a witness to the community's past and can be followed as a guide into their present and future.

Peter's speech in Acts 1:15–23 is the beginning point in the development of Peter as a leader that culminates in the Cornelius episode and the Jerusalem council of Acts 15. I want to suggest a trajectory in the use of citations of Scripture in Peter's speeches that can serve as a guide to the further characterization of Peter in Acts and the development of his character as the community's leader.

ACTS 2

As noted, in Peter's Acts 1 speech, Peter first cites Scripture to corroborate the community's experience by locating this experience within the frame of the fulfillment of prophecy. At a surface level, a similar pattern obtains in Peter's speech at Pentecost: Peter opens his speech with a reference to an event that has happened to the community—the experiences narrated in Acts 2:1–11—which he then interprets through a direct citation of Scripture.²⁶

Yet Peter's speech in Acts 2 actually shows a much higher degree of freedom in the use of Scripture and in the way the events are interpreted than in Acts 1. To begin with, unlike Acts 1, where the death of Judas has occurred outside the flow of the story, the rush of wind, the flames of fire, and the speaking in multiple languages are part of the shared experience of the crowd and the reader. Luke positions Peter not just as an interpreter of extra-textual activities, but as an interpreter of events that his audience has experienced for themselves—either by being a member of the crowd (the narrative audience for the speech) or by being a reader of Acts. Because Peter's hearers can check Peter's interpretation of the events against their own experience of the events, there is more at stake for Peter in his interpretation.

The speech's set-up for the Joel citation highlights this new dimension in Peter's use of Scripture. First, unlike Acts 1:16, where the formula

²⁶ See Steyn's structural analysis of the parallels between the two speeches, *Septuagint Quotations*, 27.

about the fulfillment of Scripture provides the warrant for listening to Peter, in Acts 2:14 Peter's own authority provides the warrant for listening ("listen to my words"). Not the words of Scripture, but the words of Peter are now enough to command attention. Second, Peter opposes his interpretation to the prevailing interpretation of the crowd. By beginning his words to his audience with a strong antithesis,²⁷ Peter positions his interpretation of the event as authoritative and as a corrective to the prevailing opinion that the multi-lingual speakers were drunk even before he cites Scripture. The reference to Joel in v. 16 is part of Peter's corrective (note the *ἀλλά* with which the citation formula is introduced). The citation of Scripture does not, as in Acts 1:16–20c, function to corroborate the community's experience but to correct their interpretation of their experience. Through his citation of the Joel text, Peter leads the community to an interpretation of their experience that would not be possible without Peter's corrective use of Scripture. What happens with Peter's citation of Scripture in Acts 2 is much more creative than what occurred in the opening of the Acts 1 speech.

The significant hermeneutical function of the Joel citation in Acts 2, both for the events of Pentecost and for the events of Acts as a whole, is well-known and much discussed. In *Text to Text Pours Forth Speech*, for example, Robert Brawley has observed that the citation of Joel in Acts 2 moves beyond fulfillment of prophecy to a hermeneutical role that is necessary to understand what is transpiring. Brawley helpfully and suggestively observes that Peter's use of Scripture in Acts 2 can best be interpreted by reference to Luke 24:45: the risen Jesus has opened Peter's mind to understand Scripture.²⁸

Yet the emphasis in studies of the Pentecost speech remains on Luke's intertextual hermeneutic, of which Acts 2 is the banner example, with Peter's role in this hermeneutic and how this role shapes his characterization left largely unexplored. If, however, we read Peter's citation of Scripture in Acts 1 and 2 with an eye to characterization, we see that the Peter of Acts 2 is not the same interpreter—and hence not the same "type"—as we find in Acts 1. Peter interprets Scripture more creatively and freely and so leads this community more creatively and freely than

²⁷ Ibid., 69.

²⁸ Brawley, *Text to Text*, 79.

he does in Acts 1. Peter's interpretation of LXX Joel 3 for the community is embodied first in his own leadership of the community.

That Peter embodies the prophecy of Joel in his own leadership will be confirmed for the reader by the narrator. In Acts 4 Luke makes several explicit statements about Peter's character: 4:8, Peter is "filled with the Holy Spirit"; 4:13, "when they saw the boldness of Peter and John and realized that they were uneducated and ordinary men, they were amazed and recognized them as companions of Jesus." At this point in the narrative, these are not simply narratorial assertions, which the reader is asked to accept. Rather, the reader has already experienced these traits as true of Peter, so that the narrator is simply naming what the reader already knows.

PETER AND CORNELIUS

The boldness of Peter's leadership, and the attendant increasing freedom with which he interprets Scripture, is very much in evidence in the Cornelius episode. What is striking, and significant for the trajectory that I am suggesting, is that in Peter's very important speeches about the events leading up to and interpreting Cornelius's baptism, there are no direct citations of Scripture. Peter's words contain allusions to Scripture: Peter's words in 10:14 are an allusion to Ezek 4:14; his words in 10:26 an allusion to Wis 7:1.²⁹ But nowhere does Peter use the formal language of Scripture citation that characterized his earlier speeches in Acts.

Instead, the ground for Peter's leadership shifts to his own experience. In Acts 11:5–9, for example, Peter's vision occupies the rhetorical place that the scriptural citation occupied in his earlier speeches, providing the warrant for action and interpretation. Peter's speeches in Acts 10–11 are built around the experience and witness of the community (10:34–43) and his own experience (11:4–18), which he now appears free to interpret for himself.³⁰ Peter neither relies on nor makes recourse to formal prediction or fulfillment of Scripture to authorize either his words or his deeds in leading the community in a new direction. This is not the

²⁹ The vision itself can be read as a narrative midrash on Leviticus 11.

³⁰ Kurz, ("Effects of Variant Narrators in Acts 10–11," 570–86) carefully analyzes how the events of Acts 10–11 are repeated and are "deliberately refocused through the viewpoints of the characters narrating them" (573).

same man who in Acts 1:15–23 does not commend any interpretation or action apart from an authorizing word of Scripture.

ACTS 15

Peter's speech before the Jerusalem council (15:7–11) follows the same pattern of Scripture use as his speeches in Acts 10 and 11: allusions to Scripture (note the echo of Exod 17:2 in Peter's words in v. 10), but no direct and formal citations. Instead, again, Peter's own experience (v. 7), and what his experience reveals about the work of God, is presented as the determining consideration for the future shape of the Gentile mission.

James's speech in Acts 15:13–21, however, not Peter's own words, is the speech that marks the culmination of Peter's transformation and growth as a character in Acts. In the speech that leads to the council's decision to appoint formal delegates to the Gentiles and that establishes the terms for Jewish/Gentile cultic interactions, James provides two warrants for his decision: the experience of Peter (called by his Semitic name, Simeon) and the words of Scripture. The formal language of direct citation of Scripture returns in James's speech ("as it is written"), and what is most striking is the way in which James holds the experience of Peter and the words of Scripture together. James opens with the experience and witness of Peter (v. 14), which he then explicitly verifies with a citation of Scripture: "and this agrees with the words of the prophets as it is written" (v. 15). Both warrants, Peter's experience and the fulfillment of Scripture, lead James to his decision.

In James's speech to the Jerusalem council, Peter's apostolic experience becomes the stuff of the fulfillment of prophecy and the warrant for community action. Peter has moved from citing Scripture to having others cite his experience alongside Scripture as authoritative for the community's decision-making.³¹ Peter, who in Acts 1:15–23, led only by staying close to the carefully constrained world of the dictates of Scripture, has evolved into a leader whose own experience occupies the place that he once ceded to Scripture.

³¹ Luke Timothy Johnson, *Scripture and Discernment: Decision Making in the Church* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1996), 83–84, notes Peter's role in this chapter, but not the connections with character development and Scripture.

CONCLUSION

From direct citation of Scripture to citation of his experience alongside Scripture, the Peter who emerges from the pages of Acts cannot simply be characterized with the flat, undifferentiated label, “leader.” Rather, by paying attention to the ways in which Scripture is cited in Peter’s speeches, one can observe a carefully and subtly delineated portrait of Peter emerge from the pages of Acts. It therefore seems fair to say that not only does Luke interpret Scripture through his characters, but he does indeed interpret his characters through Scripture.

LUKE'S "PLAN OF GOD" FROM THE GREEK PSALTER: THE RHETORICAL THRUST OF "THE PROPHETS AND THE PSALMS" IN PETER'S SPEECH AT PENTECOST¹

David P. Moessner

Luke presents the first and third longest explicit citations of the Jewish scriptures in the NT in his Acts 2 Pentecost speech. The author of Luke-Acts, in fact, adds a third quotation that, together with the other two, divides Peter's address into three discrete movements. Each division features a prophetic utterance from the Septuagint to structure the *narratio* of Luke's argument: Joel 3:1–5 in Acts 2:14–21 (2:17–21)—“God says” (longest); Ps 15:8–11 in Acts 2:22–28 (2:25–28)—“David says” (third longest);² Ps 109:1 in Acts 2:29–36 (2:34–35)—“he himself [David] says.” Rather than his characteristic rhetoric of “to fulfill,” Luke introduces each citation as “God” or the prophet continuing to speak (present tense) through scripture to interpret what the Pentecost pilgrims are experiencing in the “strong wind,” “tongues like fire,” and “variety” of foreign “tongues” uttered in their midst (Acts 2:1–4). Ostensibly Peter must explain how the eschatological “pouring out” of the Spirit could be occurring even though the people of Israel (“you”) had “crucified this Jesus whom God had established as Lord and Christ” (2:36). How could Israel, together with the “law-less” Romans, violently execute Israel's own “Messiah” and still in some way be enacting “the fore-ordained plan and prescience of God” (2:23)?

Of the three citations, commentators have the most difficulty in explaining why Luke would quote nine lines of Ps 15 only apparently to find, in two of them, one rather cryptic nugget allegedly predicting

¹ First read in slightly different form in the “Greek Bible Consultation” of the Society of Biblical Literature annual meeting in Washington, D.C. in November 2006. The plot of the suffering righteous emerging from the interactive reading of the two psalms, section II below, represents a substantial development of the scriptural exegesis of Luke's “plan of God” beyond my first attempt at the rhetorical strategy of the Pentecost speech in my “Two Lords ‘at the Right Hand’? The Psalms and an Intertextual Reading of Peter's Pentecost Speech (Acts 2:14–36),” in *Literary Studies in Luke-Acts: Essays in Honor of Joseph B. Tyson* (ed. R. P. Thompson and T. E. Phillips; Macon: Mercer University Press, 1998), 215–32.

² Cf. Heb 8:8–12 (Jer 31:31–34 = LXX, Jer 38:31–34)—the second longest citation of the Jewish scriptures in the NT.

the resurrection from the dead of David's future offspring and *χριστός* (Ps 15:10 in Acts 2:27, paraphrased in 2:30–32). To be sure, Ps 15:10 is echoed in 2:31 as a specific prophecy by David the “patriarch” and “prophet” (2:29–30) who, “seeing in advance,” thus spoke of the resurrection of “the Christ” (ὁ *χριστός*) of his own “offspring/fruit of his loins” who would “sit” some day upon David's own “throne.” This direct application by Peter to Jesus' resurrection builds to the *peroratio* in v. 36—“Let the whole house of Israel know with clear certainty that God has established him as both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you *yourselves* crucified.” This summary indictment is reason enough—so the standard explanation runs³—to cite a greater number of the lines of the psalm surrounding Ps 15:10. Why did the people not have the presence of mind to realize that in rejecting Jesus of Nazareth, they were actually crucifying this “holy one” of Ps 15 of David's own lineage?!⁴

Consequently, in the standard interpretation Ps 15:10 becomes an easy way out of Israel's dilemma. Though the people should have known better than to crucify “the Christ” of David's own loins, God “lowers the crane” to rescue the whole salvation story as Jesus is raised up from the dead. Unlike David, when this “holy one” dies, his “flesh” does not decay in the tomb, just as David foresaw (cf. Acts 2:26c [David's flesh]→ 2:31b [the Christ's]). Presumably, then, this difference becomes all telling for the inclusion, in the first place, of Ps 15 with its extensive quotation. This “holy one's” reprieve from bodily decomposition functions

³ See, inter alia, W. H. Bellinger, Jr., “The Psalms and Acts: Reading and Rereading,” in *Steadfast Purpose: Essays on Acts in Honor of Henry Jackson Flanders, Jr.* (ed. N. H. Keathley; Waco: Baylor University Press, 1990), 127–43, esp. 128–36; J. D. G. Dunn, *The Acts of the Apostles* (Peterborough: Epworth, 1996), 30–31; J. Dupont, *The Salvation of the Gentiles: Essays on the Acts of the Apostles* (trans. J. R. Keating; New York: Paulist, 1979), 103–28; E. Haenchen, *The Acts of the Apostles* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1971), 179–82; J. A. Fitzmyer, *The Acts of the Apostles* (AB 31; New York: Doubleday, 1998), 256–57; B. R. Gaventa, *The Acts of the Apostles* (Nashville: Abingdon, 2003), 78; L. T. Johnson, *The Acts of the Apostles* (Collegeville: Liturgical, 1992), 48–55; D. Juel “Social Dimensions of Exegesis: The Use of Psalm 16 in Acts 2,” *CBQ* 43 (1981): 543–86; G. Krodel, *Acts* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1986), 83–89; I. H. Marshall, *Acts* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980), 73–81; R. C. Tannehill, *The Narrative Unity of Luke-Acts: A Literary Interpretation*, Vol. 2: *The Acts of the Apostles* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1990), 26–42; and B. Witherington III (*The Acts of the Apostles: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998]), who allows some explanation of the crucifixion although the main focus of Ps 15 is still on the resurrection: “that what happened to Jesus was part of a preordained plan as revealed in Scripture” (146).

⁴ For a traditio-historical approach, see H. W. Boers (“Psalm 16 and the Historical Origin of the Christian Faith,” *ZNW* 60 [1969]: 105–10), who comes to the revealing conclusion that an “earlier” function of Psalm 15(16) was to interpret the *death* of Jesus before it became a commentary on the resurrection experiences of the early believers (i.e., conventional interpretation).

as a *deus ex machina* not only for David ("my flesh shall dwell in hope," Ps 15:9c in Acts 2:26c), but also for the whole "foreordained plan and prescience of God" in offering Israel once again salvation in Jesus of Nazareth (cf. Acts 2:23–24, 33, 38–40). Instead of dying and rotting in the tomb, this "holy one" is raised up to allow the whole saving action to continue and to build to the giving of the Spirit and even to redound to the rescue of the likes of a David in Hades.

But why in narrative oral performance would Luke waste rhetorical time and space with insignificant details that would only distract and therefore detract from the building argument? Why have David mention his great "joy" in "continually seeing" "the Lord" "at his right hand," which produces a new confidence that he will not die before his time nor before he has followed the "paths that lead to life" and to "the joy of your [God's?] presence" (Ps 15:8, 11 in Acts 2:25, 28)? What do "paths of life" and a new confidence vis-à-vis the intimidation of enemies have to do with resurrection and "the Christ"? Is it possible that suffering and its eschatological outcome in the "release of sins," not "raising up" after death per se, composes the tenor of reference for "your holy one"?

The thesis presented here in gratitude for Professor Carl Holladay's enormous contribution to the understanding of Luke-Acts, to Hellenistic historiography in particular, and to the whole field of Judaism and early Christianity more generally is that each of the three citations of Septuagint scripture delineates the essential blueprint of the "plan of God"—first articulated by Peter in Acts 2:23 and utilized by Luke some five other times in Luke-Acts⁵—to encapsulate the divine intent of the "Lord" of Israel and the nations in the fulfilled messianic salvation. Indeed, each of the three citations functions as *synecdoche* for this "plan" by circumscribing a critical aspect of the larger movement while, at the same time, implicating the other two *pars pro toto*. It is manifest that the Joel 3 and Ps 109 texts complement each other by interpreting each other; the one "exalted at the right hand" as "my Lord" certainly qualifies to fill the role of "pouring out" the Spirit of "the end days" (Acts 2:17a→2:33). But what about "the Christ"? Why does Peter conclude his argument by claiming that through all these events it had become clear that God had appointed Jesus both "Lord and Christ" (2:36b)? What does the "anointed of the Lord"/"Messiah of Israel" have to do with exaltation and the giving of the Spirit?

⁵ "The plan of God" or slight variations in Luke-Acts: Luke 7:30; Acts 2:23; 4:28; 5:38 (ironically through Gamaliel); 13:36; 20:27; 27:12, 42.

One of the hallmarks of Carl Holladay's scholarship is his uncanny ability to sort out varying approaches to the text and to coordinate and integrate the methods that are most historically germane and critically fruitful in bringing NT texts to life in both their ancient and contemporary contexts. It is hoped that this new approach to the Pentecost speech offered here might in some small measure honor Carl's sterling scholarship.

I

At the end of the first volume, the risen Crucified had "opened the minds [of the apostles] to comprehend the scriptures," adding "the promise" that "power from the exalted place" would soon "clothe them" (Luke 24:44–49). Now at Pentecost as this promise comes to fruition, Peter—representing the group whose minds had been enlightened by Christ himself—opens up the three scriptures to expound "the plan of God." Thus at the conclusion of his first volume Luke had anticipated Peter's inaugural speech through Jesus' final words. In Luke 24:44–49 Jesus provides a three point summation of the whole of the scriptures regarding Israel's salvation and its *χριστός*:⁶ a. The Messiah must suffer (Luke 24:46a); b. the Messiah must rise from the dead (24:46b); and, c. in Messiah's name the release of sins must be proclaimed to all the nations by the apostles as witnesses (24:47–48). This essential "plan" of the scriptures can be enacted, however, only by the subsequent empowerment of these witnesses "from the exalted place" (*ἐξ ὕψους*, Luke 24:49).

It is curious that Luke has Peter pick up each of these three points as Peter "opens up" the scriptures, including the psalms (Luke 24:44c), for the Pentecost pilgrims. As the rhetorical occasion requires, Peter begins with the Joel 3 text to interpret the wind and the fire and the many languages. The basic sequence of texts in Acts becomes perforce c., a., b.:

⁶ As one example of the pervasive scriptural hermeneutic that configures as well as figures Luke's two volumes is his phrase, with slight variations, "[all] that stands written." Some twenty-two times Luke cites this summary formula in capturing the import of an event or in providing the basis of the larger narrative sequence of characters and their interactions (Luke 2:23; 3:4; 4:4, 8, 10, 17; 7:27; 10:26; 18:31; 19:46; 20:17; 21:22; 22:37; 24:44, 46; Acts 1:20; 7:42; 13:29, 33; 15:15; 23:5; 24:14). Cf. Luke 1:70; 2:22; 3:4; 4:17; 5:14; 20:37; 24:25; Acts 2:16, 30; 3:22; 7:48; 8:28, 30, 34; 13:27, 39, 40; 15:21; 28:25.

Acts 2:1–41

Context:

2:1–13 Residents and Pentecost sojourners in Jerusalem (all nations of earth) confused and marveling at Galileans speaking their native languages

1. 2:14–21 The Pouring Out of the Spirit Upon “All Flesh” Is the Fulfillment of the Salvation of the End Days as the Scriptures (God speaks [v. 17] through the *Prophet Joel*) Declare

v. 17c—prophesying (men and women)

v. 17d—visions and dreams (young and old)

Joel 3 c. v. 18—men and women “servants” shall prophesy

Luke 24:47–49 v. 19a,b—wonders and signs (heaven and earth)

vv. 19b–20—Cosmic Impact to the Day of the Lord (all space and time)

2. 2:22–28 Jesus of Nazareth’s Signs, Crucifixion, and Resurrection Already Inaugurated the End Days of Salvation as the Scriptures (David speaks [v. 25] in *Psalms 15/16*) Declare

v. 22—Mighty works, wonders, and signs attested by God

v. 23—Affixing of Jesus by the Israelites as plan of God

v. 24—Loosing/freeing from pangs/cords of death by God

Psalms 15 a. vv. 25–28—David (Ps 15:8–11 b) as prophet speaks about Jesus of Nazareth, God’s Holy One, as the Lord **“at my right hand”** who is rejected by his own people and yet never decomposes in the grave, even as David himself suffers rebuke from the people of Israel, knows he will die, and be buried, and yet takes comfort that his Lord will not abandon him in death.

3. 2:29–36 As Exalted Christ and Lord at God’s **“right hand,”** Jesus Is Pouring Out the spirit of the Salvation of the End Days as the Scriptures (David speaks [v. 34] in *Psalms 109/110*) Declare

vv. 29–31—the prophet David, whose tomb is still present, saw and spoke of the resurrection and the enthronement of his own offspring, the Christ, whose own “flesh” would not waste away in a tomb (i.e., “Your Holy One,” [Ps. 15:10 ~ vv. 27b→ 31b] can not be David)

v. 32—God did raise up Jesus, of which the apostles are witnesses

v. 33—Jesus has in fact been exalted and has received the promise of the Father and, thus, is the one who is pouring out what the audience is seeing and hearing

Psalms 109 b. vv. 34–35—David himself speaks of this “Lord and Christ” when he declares that the “Lord” [God] said to Jesus, “my Lord,” “Sit **at my right hand**” (Ps. 109:1)

QED v. 36—Therefore, God had indeed established the Jesus whom Israel crucified as both “Lord and Christ” [i.e., both David’s Lord and “anointed” heir]

Response:

2:37–41 Through repentance (change of orientation/mind-set) the promise of the Spirit is for Israel and for all those Afar (the plot of Acts according to “the plan of God”)

c. *Joel 3* explains how it is that release of sins is being proclaimed in Messiah's name to all the nations, as those gathered from every nation hear in their own native tongues the preaching of the salvation story fulfilled in Israel's Messiah (Acts 2:5–13)—just as Jesus, at the end of volume one, had foreseen and commanded (Luke 24:47).

b. *Psalms 109* then describes how David had also foreseen the enthronement of “my Lord” to the exalted Place where the “offspring of his womb” (Ps 109:3b) would reign over his enemies. The “my” of “my Lord” must refer to David, since he is introduced as the speaker, prophesying about his Lord enthroned (Ps 109:1 in Acts 2:34).

Consequently Luke argues through *inclusio*: The wind, flame, and multiple languages are due to the enthroned “Lord and Christ” who is “pouring out the Spirit upon all flesh,” just as Joel had prophesied (Joel 3:5: “Everyone who calls upon the name of this Lord will be saved” [Acts 2:21; cf. 2:40b: “be saved from this twisted generation”]).

a. *Psalms 15* then should illumine how it could have happened that the Messiah, David's own progeny, could suffer and be delivered over to crucifixion and still be enacting “the foreordained plan and prescience of God.” The lines from Ps 15 hold Luke's (Peter's) answer: David had already prefigured that fate in both his life and death for his future scion, Jesus of Nazareth. Therefore, the people of Israel had been given a powerful demonstration in advance of what their Messiah would be like. But because the people acted in character as a “twisted generation,” they must now change their whole way of comprehending their response to David's “Lord and Christ.”

If Luke follows the same rhetorical strategy for Ps 15 as he does for the Joel and Ps 109 texts, then Ps 15 will produce an organic connection between the Spirit poured out upon the nations, on the one side, and “my Lord's” enthronement to “the right hand,” on the other. We can phrase the issue thus: What does “calling upon the name of the Lord” in Acts 2:21 (Joel 3:5) have to do with “repenting/changing of the mind and being baptized into the name of Jesus Messiah for the release of sins” and thereby “receiving the gift of the Holy Spirit,” as Peter indicates to his contrite audience (Acts 2:37–38)?

II

The speech opens with Peter's explanation of why the gathered believers could not be “drunk” in speaking all the international languages (Acts

2:7–12). Rather, what is happening is nothing less than the realization of Joel's marvelous vision of Israel's "sons and daughters prophesying, its youth seeing visions and its senior citizens dreaming dreams" (2:17).⁷ More than that, this Joel citation forms a template for the rest of the Acts as in each major development of the plot more and more ethnic groups and people from a wide socio-economic spectrum are brought into full inclusion in the "people of God." It is also significant that in Acts 2:18 (Joel 3:2) both men and women⁸ who are receiving the end-time Spirit are characterized as "servants" (δούλοι καὶ δούλαι), a term anticipating a future scenario of the pouring out of the eschatological Spirit in fulfillment of the "plan of God" through God's "anointing" of his "holy servant Jesus" in Acts 4:23–31.⁹

The third and final section (Acts 2:29–36) will peak in a "QED" (ἀσφαλῶς οὖν) for the whole of Peter's speech even as it comes back full circle to identify the giver of "the Spirit of the end days" as the one whom David calls "my Lord" and who "sits at the right hand" of "the Lord," making his enemies "a footstool." The rhetorical strategy appears to be augmentation or *probatio* of the *narratio* that has been demonstrated through the citation of Ps 15 in the middle third of the speech, Acts 2:22–28, since 2:29 begins with the declaration that David could not be the one of whom Ps 15 prophesies, seeing that David had died and his tomb is therefore "living" proof! Hence, Ps 109:1 appears not to function as a primary proof text for Jesus' resurrection from the dead; its thrust, instead, seems to be contingent upon the force of Ps 15 whose v. 10 in this third section (Acts 2:31–32) forms a metaleptic prompting back to the argument of the second.

But does this pointing back to Ps 15 concern only the two lines of Ps 15:10 in Acts 2:27, as the standard interpretation avows, or does the

⁷ See, e.g., Acts 7:55–56; 9:10–16 [11–12]; 10:3–7, 10–16; 11:28. For "signs and wonders" of the Joel text as introducing the "mighty acts of God" as God working through Jesus the mighty acts of salvation, see R. B. Sloan "Signs and Wonders: A Rhetorical Clue to the Pentecost Discourse," in Keathley, *Steadfast Purpose*, 145–62; in a similar vein, D. J. Treier, "The Fulfillment of Joel 2:28–32: A Multiple-Lens Approach," *JETS* 40 (1997): 13–26.

⁸ See, e.g., men who prophesy, Acts 19:6–7; for women, Acts 21:8–9, et al.

⁹ Cf. "the holy one, your servant Jesus" (Acts 4:27); "your plan which you foreordained to take place" (4:28); "let your servants speak your word with boldness as you extend your hand to heal and to perform signs and wonders through your holy servant Jesus" (4:29–30). The link to Joel 3 in Acts 2 is multi-faceted.

contrast of the “holy one’s” fate in Hades to David’s “abandonment” point rather to the larger comparison and contrast of their calling, reception, and fate at the hands of their own people, perhaps then to the larger profile of David (and the “holy one”) in the whole of Ps 15?

Peter’s call in his *peroratio* to a radically new way of thinking makes the most sense when we see that Luke represents this earliest Jesus-messianist community re-reading their scriptures with the new lens that the resurrected-Crucified himself had given them (Luke 24:44–47). Thus Peter illumines the “plan of God” by reading in tandem the only two psalms in the Septuagint psalter in which the phrase “my lord” occurs, Pss 15 and 109. In both psalms David speaks *to* and speaks *about* two distinct “Lords” whose actions upon earth climax at “the Lord’s right hand.” These two “Lords” in the two psalms are thus read as two primary characters in one larger plot of “the foreordained plan and prescience of God” (Acts 2:23) that has come to a major fulfillment in the coming of the Spirit upon all nations.

Before we see how this common plot emerges, we must distinguish between HB Ps 16 and LXX Ps 15: Whereas Ps 16 rehearses David’s “song of trust,” Ps 15 sketches David’s self-portrait as a “suffering righteous of the Lord” to produce a very different profile.¹⁰

What rings through nearly every verse of the Hebrew is the ebullient confidence David has in Yahweh’s “goodness” and in his own “good lot” with Yahweh (Ps 16:2). Not even Sheol will be able to hold David’s “life.” Indeed, at Lord Yahweh’s (“your”) “*right hand*” are the very “pleasures” of life “forever” (16:10–11). The linkage, however, between “my Lord” and “suffering saints” is absent in Ps 16. By contrast, the David of Ps 15 is in solidarity with “my Lord” and with other saints in the land as they experience great persecution (“You are my Lord . . . on behalf of all the saints . . . their afflictions have multiplied . . . their bloody meetings . . . the Lord before me continually . . . that I should not be shaken,” vv. 2, 3, 4, 8). It is this “my Lord” whom David sees in his presence (“at my right hand”) and also foresees would one day be exalted at the Lord God’s “right hand” (“not see decomposition . . . at your right hand there are delights forever” vv. 10, 11).

It will be helpful to place the psalms together in parallel columns. The greatest difference between Ps 15 and Ps 16 occurs in vv. 3–6,

¹⁰ For a different view, that LXX Ps 15 in the ethos of the Hellenistic era brings out rather the fuller eschatological implications of the Hebrew Ps 16, see Armin Schmitt, “Ps 16,8–11 als Zeugnis der Auferstehung in der Apg,” *BZ* 17 (1973): 229–48.

3–5 respectively as indicated between the columns. The citation of Ps 15:8–11 in Acts 2:25b–28 is in italics, with important differences underlined:

Psalm 16 (Hebrew—NRSV trans.)

¹ Protect me, O God, for in you I take refuge.

² I say to the LORD, "You are my Lord; I have no good apart from you."

³ As for the holy ones in the land, they are the noble, in whom is all my delight.

⁴ Those who choose another god multiply their sorrows; their drink offerings of blood I will not pour out or take their names upon my lips.

⁵ The LORD is my chosen portion and my cup; you hold my lot.

⁶ The boundary lines have fallen for me in pleasant places; I have a goodly heritage.

⁷ I bless the LORD who gives me counsel; in the night also my heart instructs me.

⁸ I keep the LORD always before me; because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved.

⁹ Therefore my heart is glad, and my soul rejoices; my body also rests secure.

¹⁰ For you do not give me up to Sheol, or let your faithful one see the Pit.

¹¹ You show me the path of life. In your presence there is fullness of joy; in your right hand are pleasures forevermore.

Psalm 15 (LXX—my trans.)

¹ Keep me, O Lord; for I have hoped in you.

² I said to the Lord, you are my Lord; for you have no need of my goodness

³ On behalf of the saints that are in His land, he has magnified all His pleasure in them.

⁴ Their afflictions (weaknesses/ bodily illnesses) have been multiplied; afterward they hastened.

⁵ I will certainly not assemble their bloody meetings, neither will I make mention of their names with my lips.

⁶ The Lord is the portion of my inheritance and of my cup; you are the one who restores my inheritance to me

⁷ The measuring lines have fallen to me in the best places; yes, I have a most excellent inheritance.

⁸ *I kept seeing the Lord before me continually in my presence; for he is at my right hand, that I should not be shaken.*

⁹ *Therefore my heart rejoiced and my tongue exulted; more than that also, my flesh shall rest (dwell) in hope,*

¹⁰ *Because You will not abandon my life in Hades, neither will You allow Your Holy One to see decomposition.*

¹¹ *You have made known to me the ways of (that lead to) life; You will fill me with joy with Your presence; at Your right hand there are delights for ever.*

The argument from the psalms in the Pentecost speech now takes on a very different twist. Placing Pss 15 and 109 side by side will facilitate the interactive reading of the two that the early church comprehends as one larger unfolding of the “plan” that David foresaw:

Psalm 15 (LXX) (my trans.)
A Writing of David

¹ Keep me, O Lord; for I have hoped in you.

² I said to the Lord, you are my Lord; for you have no need of my goodness

³ On behalf of the saints that are in his land, he has magnified all his pleasure in them.

⁴ Their weaknesses (illnesses/bodily afflictions) have been multiplied;
afterward they hastened.

⁵ I will certainly not assemble their bloody meetings, neither will I make mention of their names with my lips.

⁶ The Lord is the portion of my inheritance and of my cup: you are the one who restores my inheritance to me.

⁷ The measuring lines have fallen to me in the best places; yes, I have a most excellent inheritance.

⁸ I kept seeing the Lord before me continually in my presence; for he is at my Right hand, that I should not be shaken.

⁹ *Therefore my heart rejoiced and my tongue exulted; more than that also, my flesh shall rest (dwell) in hope,*

¹⁰ *Because you will not abandon my life in Hades, neither will you allow your Holy One to see decomposition.*

¹¹ *You have made known to me the ways of (that lead to) life; You will fill me with joy with your presence; at your right hand there are delights for ever.*

Psalm 109 (LXX) (my trans.)
A Psalm of David

¹ *The Lord said to my Lord, “Sit at my right hand, until I make your enemies your footstool.”*

² The Lord shall send out for you a scepter of power out of Zion; rule in the midst of your enemies.

³ With you is dominion in the day of your power, amidst the splendors of your saints. I have begotten you from the womb before the morning.

⁴ The Lord swore an oath and will not change his mind, “You are a priest forever, according to the order of Melchizedek.”

⁵ The Lord at your right hand has dashed into pieces kings in the day of his wrath.

⁶ He shall execute judgment among the nations, he shall fill up [the number of] corpses, he shall crush the heads of many upon the earth.

⁷ He shall drink from the brook on the way; therefore he will lift up his head.

It should be acknowledged at the outset that there are multiple ways to identify speaker and addressee. The psalms are especially fluid in their ability to address different audiences in different historical settings and in varying periods of Jewish as well as the church’s history of interpretation. God may speak, David speaks, the psalmist-narrator speaks, the synagogue speaks, and so on. More importantly for our analysis, it is not possible to determine when one speaker finishes and the narrator or another character in the scenario takes over. For instance, in Ps

109:2 does the David identified as the psalmist in the LXX sub-heading continue to speak (cf. "my Lord" in 109:1) or does "the Lord" who is speaking at the end of the verse continue to speak in v. 2, or does a psalmist-narrator now address the worshipping, reading audience? Do these voices overlap? Or who is the "you" (σου [sg.]) in v. 2: David? the "my Lord" of v. 1? the general audience? Presumably the "Lord" of v. 2 wields the same type of authority as in v. 1 in granting a shared rule over "enemies" as "Lord" (v. 1: "at my right hand") or in dispatching a "scepter" of rule "in the midst of your enemies" (v. 2).

It would make sense at least at one level to read v. 2 as David continuing to speak but now more directly to the "my Lord" of v. 1: If in v. 1 David announces to his audience what "the Lord" had said to his ("my") Lord, now in v. 2 David speaks to "his" Lord about the same granting of power and authority that "the Lord" had declared in v. 1. "The Lord" of v. 2 would then be identical with "the Lord" of v. 1.

Nonetheless, one could undoubtedly make an equally valid case for understanding the speaker of v. 2 to be "the Lord" of v. 1 who continues to speak but now to David as the "you." So the Lord now promises David that his Lord (cf. "my Lord," v. 1) will provide David with the Lord's own scepter of power so that David will be able to rule in the midst of his own enemies. The point to stress, therefore, is that there is more than one way to construe the developments and dynamics of the psalm(s) as the histories of interpretation have made clear.

Our contention therefore concerning the way that Luke through earlier traditions has interpreted these psalms to refer to Jesus illustrates this versatility of polyvalent referents within early Jewish-Christian exegesis. Yet according to Luke, Jesus himself had provided a very different way of viewing the psalms as he had to "open the minds" of the apostles before they could comprehend that at fundamental points the psalms were "referring" to himself (Luke 24:45–46; cf. v. 44b—περὶ ἐμοῦ)!

The logic of the argument of the Pentecost "speech" seems to make the most sense and possess a greater persuasive power when the "the Lord" at David's ("my") "right hand" of Ps 15:8 in Acts 2:25b–c is identified as the same "Lord" at "the Lord's" ("my") "right hand" of Ps 109:1 in Acts 2:34b–35.

We can list the formal parallels between the two psalms: (1) "My Lord" occurs (and only in these psalms) (Pss 15:2/109:1); (2) a "Lord" and/or David is aligned with "saints" (Pss 15:3/109:3); (3) "My Lord" and/or David has "enemies" (Pss 15:4–5, 8/109:2, 5–7); (4) a Lord and/or David defeats the enemies (Pss 15:5, 8, 10/109:1b, 2, 5–7); (5) "My Lord" is enthroned at "the Lord's right hand" or there are wondrous

delights at a “Lord’s” “right hand” (Pss 15:11/109:1); (6) David has great hope for a final (eschatological) triumph of a “Lord” over all of the enemies (Pss 15:9b–11/109:1, 4–6).

The emerging plot of the two psalms could be configured thus:

David addresses the Lord of Ps 15:1 as “my Lord” in 15:2. This “my Lord” takes special delight in the saints (“holy ones”) that are in this Lord’s “land” who are undergoing severe persecution, including physical abuse of some sort (“bodily afflictions” [ἀσθένειαι]; “gatherings resulting in bloodshed” [τὰς συναγωγὰς αὐτῶν ἐξ αἱμάτων]); and the need for secrecy regarding the identities of these saints (οὐδὲ μὴ μνησθῶ τῶν ὀνομάτων αὐτῶν διὰ χειλέων μου). In the midst of this oppression, David avows a special solidarity with this Lord concerning both his inheritance and his “cup” of suffering; through all the opposition, David has learned discipline (παιδεύω) from this Lord, including the experience of his own bodily suffering (Ps 15:7). Thus David remains confident through this whole period of suffering that this Lord will restore his true inheritance (Ps 15:5–6).

Moreover it is David’s experience of “continually seeing” this “Lord” “at my [his] right hand” precisely in the midst of this persecution that convinces him that he would not be defeated or die before his time (“that I should not be shaken”) (Ps 15:8). Even more (ἔτι δὲ καί, Ps 15:9c in Acts 2:26c), through continual solidarity with this Lord, David foresees that he himself would not simply rot in decay after his death; because of this Lord’s presence in David’s own presence, David boldly announces that “you” (“the Lord”/God) will not “abandon” him to the tomb because “you” (“the Lord”/God) will not allow the “Lord” at his side, this “holy one,” even to decompose in the tomb. This Lord will in fact precede David in final triumph over death (Ps 15:9–10). Consequently it is David’s vision at his own right hand that enables him to see the eschatological vision at the Lord God’s “right hand” where there will be “delights forever” (εἰς τέλος) (Ps 15:11c). Because of “my Lord’s” presence with David in his earthly rule, David has embraced an eschatological hope that already anticipates the final “joy” of the Lord’s presence at the Lord God’s right hand.

This reading of Ps 15 is emboldened by Ps 109. Indeed, each psalm invites mutual interpretation and enrichment. In Ps 109 David sees in advance that the “my Lord” who is constantly at his side (cf. Ps 15:7–9) is invested at the Lord God’s right hand with ultimate authority and power (Ps 109:1). The enemies that David, “the saints in the land,” and “my Lord” had suffered in solidarity during David’s reign (cf. Ps 15:2–4)

are indeed defeated by the same "my Lord" who had been at David's side but now is ensconced at the Lord God's "side" (Ps 109:2–3a).

Probably the most straightforward reading of Ps 109:2–4 is for David to resume direct speaking as the psalmist in v. 2 so that David is speaking directly to "my Lord" of v. 1 as "you" (Ps 109:2 [σοι, σου], 3 [σου—3x; σε], 4 [σού]). Since David has overheard the Lord speak to "my Lord," David is privy to his Lord's calling and fate (cf. Ps 15:10): "My Lord" will rule from Zion over all the enemies of God/Israel, while at the same time this rule will be constituted and characterized by a special solidarity with the "splendor of your [my Lord's] holy ones" (Ps 109:2–3a; cf. Ps 15:3). What is more, David speaks with the divine authority of investiture by declaring, "I have given you birth from the womb before the morning dawn" (Ps 109:3b). "My Lord" is David's own offspring!¹¹ "My Lord" thus qualifies to be both David's "Lord and Christ." With eschatological dominion this Lord and offspring will function as a "priest" in the priestly "order of Melchizedek." Similar to v. 1, David has overheard the Lord God swear an oath to David's "my Lord" and repeats this declaration to his audience (Ps 109:4; cf. Ps 15:3).

In Ps 109:5–7 the audience (and speaker) appears to change. Now David could form the primary audience (σου, Ps 109:5) as he is told by a narrator-psalmist that a "Lord" at his "right hand" has already defeated his enemies and in the future will oppose and defeat again any enemy of Israel as this Lord will "judge among the nations" and be acclaimed the universal ruler over all ("he shall lift up the head," Ps 109:7b; cf. Ps 15:11).¹² Read in this way, vv. 5–7 comment upon Ps 15:8–11. The solidarity David was experiencing with his Lord over against his enemies during his own reign forms the pattern for the ultimate victory of the Lord over Israel's enemies at the end. David's enemies (Ps 15:4, 8; 109:5) are "my Lord's" enemies (Ps 15:4, 8; 109:2, 6–7) and vice versa. The saints in solidarity with David are in solidarity

¹¹ This detail is completely absent in HB Psalm 110; this difference ties "my Lord" more directly to David's own physical descent and thus opens the psalm and "my Lord" to messianic interpretation. LXX Ps 109 reads like a lullaby of David to his future son (and Lord)!

¹² Cf. LXX Exod. 15:6b (Song of Moses) as the Exodus paradigm for the Lord's deliverance from Israel's enemies: "Your right hand, O Lord (ἡ δεξιὰ σου κύριε), crushed the enemies."

with “my Lord” and vice versa (Ps 15:3–4; 109:3). As David’s “Lord” and offspring, “my Lord” is bound together with David and the saints even as they “defeat” their common enemies. But that is to say, the “Lord at my right hand” of Ps 15:8 is the same “Lord at your right hand” of Ps 109:5.

In both psalms, therefore, David speaks to “my Lord” (Ps 15:[1], 2, 5b; 109:2, 3, 4), and about “my Lord” to the congregation (Ps 15:3, 5a, 7–8, 10b, 11; 109:1). In both, David refers to a “Lord” (God) distinct from “my Lord” (Ps 15:[1], 10–11; 109:1, 2, 4). Finally, in both psalms, two Lords interact with David, with enemies, and with saints to carry out the “preordained plan and prescience of God” (Acts 2:25, 34: “for David says...”).

CONCLUSION

The significance of this plot for Peter’s (Luke’s) argument is now manifest:

Like Jesus’ words to the Emmaus disciples who are scolded for not knowing “Moses and the prophets” so as to recognize the script of Jesus’ messianic suffering right before their eyes (Luke 24:25–27), so Peter chides the gathered Pentecost pilgrims for “crucifying this Jesus” whom God had appointed “Lord and Christ” as spoken by the prophets and the psalms (Acts 2:36; cf. Luke 24:44). They should have known better—not because they failed to understand one obscure little reference to “a holy one” who is raised from the dead—but because the pattern of Messiah’s rule had already been graphically played out in David’s career. Like David, Jesus had divided the “house of Israel” and had thus sparked mounting opposition leading to his rejection and persecution; yet it was clear that “God had performed mighty works, wonders, and signs through him...just as you yourselves know” (Acts 2:22–23; cf. Acts 10:38).

According to the logic of Pss 15 and 109, then, Jesus’ path to life, to the “right hand of the Lord God,” had already been blazoned through David’s path to life “at his right hand.” Jesus’ enemies were the enemies to the greater plan that God had dramatically staged in advance in the suffering righteous David. David’s “holy ones” were the saints who anticipated the “holy servants” of Jesus’ career who now gather in the name of the “holy servant Jesus” to recite “our father David concerning your [Lord God’s, Acts 4:24] holy servant Jesus whom you anointed

(ἔχρισας) . . . to enact whatever your hand and your plan (ἡ βουλή) had foreordained to take place" (Acts 4:23–31). The paths that lead to life "at the right hand" are essentially, quintessentially, the paths of David's suffering and death.¹³ Peter is identifying the career of Jesus directly from the scriptures—from the suffering prophet David's own psalms "opened" by David's own "Lord and Christ" (Luke 24:44–46).¹⁴

In a surprising rhetorical twist, then, it is David who pinpoints Israel's responsibility for crucifying their Lord and Christ by pronouncing the unassailable explanation of what is transpiring on the Day of Pentecost ("David says" [present tense], 2:25, 34a)! Though long dead with the "living proof" of his tomb, it is Israel's patriarch and prophet David who corroborates Peter's charge to the gathered worshippers at the "holy place" that they must "change their whole way of thinking" and be "baptized into the name of this Jesus Messiah" so that their sin might be removed and they receive the "Holy Spirit" from David's "Lord and Christ" at "the exalted place."¹⁵ Psalm 15:8–11 in Acts

¹³ Cf. LXX Ps 17:17 ("Let your [the Lord God's] hand be upon the man of your right hand and upon the son of man whom you did strengthen for yourself") and Acts 7:56 (where Stephen "sees . . . the son of man standing at the right hand of God").

¹⁴ In the first five chapters of Acts immediately following Luke 24:44 there are sixteen citations or allusions/echoes from fourteen different psalms. After Acts 5 the citations and allusions almost completely disappear; but see, e.g., Ps 15:10 in Acts 13:35; [LXX numeration] Psalms 2; 15; 17; 19; 40; 68; 77; 88; 108; 109; 114; 117; 131; 145. One of the psalms cited twice in Acts 1–5: Psalm 15! More specifically (Hebrew numeration in parentheses when significantly different in content and/or context): Ps 2:1–2 in Acts 4:25–26; Ps 15(16):8–11 in Acts 2:25–28; Ps 15(16):10 in Acts 2:31; Ps 17(18):4 in Acts 2:24; Ps 19(20):6 in Acts 2:36; Ps 40:10 in Acts 1:16; Ps 68:26 in Acts 1:20; Ps. 77:8 in Acts 2:40; Ps 88:4 in Acts 2:30; Ps 108:8 in Acts 1:20; Ps 108:16 in Acts 2:37; Ps 109:1 in Acts 2:34–35; Ps 114(116):3 in Acts 2:24; Ps 117:22 in Acts 4:11; Ps 131:11 in Acts 2:30; Ps 145:6 in Acts 4:24!

¹⁵ David's name appears explicitly five times in Acts 1–5, along with the following epithets: "patriarch" (Acts 1:16; 2:25; 2:29); "prophet" (Acts 2:30); and "servant" (παῖς) (4:25). This last designation is intriguing since David is also called "servant" (παῖς/δοῦλος) ten times in six of the sixteen cited/alluded to psalms (see n. 14 above) [LXX-numeration]: Pss 17 [sub-title]; 68:17, 36; 77:70; 88:3, 20, 39, 50; 108:28; 131:10. David is χριστός in three of the psalms cited (Pss 17:50; 88:38; 131:10), while in two of them David's anointed status anticipates a future χριστός (Pss 88:51; 131:17); in two other psalms a χριστός occurs who appears to be a future "anointed" of David's line (Pss 2:2; 19:6). With both categories, "servant" or "Christ," David or an unnamed "righteous" person can be opposed by unrighteous or wicked folk within Israel. In Acts 4:25–26, David is introduced as "patriarch" and "servant" as he prophesies in the utterances of Ps 2:1–2 about a "Lord" and a "Lord's christ." This christ cannot be David himself but rather points to another, namely to Jesus as the "servant" and the "Lord's christ" through his rejection (crucifixion) at the hands of the "the nations and the peoples of Israel," including their leaders, "Herod and Pontius Pilate." Thus another psalm of

2:25–28 forms the critical hinge to connect the “pouring out of my [God’s] Spirit” of “the last days” to the crucified “Lord exalted at the right hand” of God. With equal irony, the reversal of Israel’s situation demonstrates that in rejecting Jesus of Nazareth, the people of Israel were unwittingly participating in “the foreordained plan and prescience of God” which was now offering to them eschatological “release from their sins,” as well as to their offspring, indeed, even to all those “far away, whomever the Lord our God calls” (Joel 3:5 echoing in Acts 2:39). Therefore the enriched “openings” of Pss 15 and 109 bear the theological gravitas of Peter’s “speech” to illumine the rejection and resurrection of Israel’s Lord and Christ, and, at the same time, to lay the scriptural foundation for the apostolic “word” of this “witness” according to the new hermeneutic of the resurrected Crucified One himself (Luke 24:44–49; Acts 1:3–8, 20–22; 2:32, 41).

David is cited to explicate the “foreordained plan of God” (Acts 4:28).

SELF-PRESENTATION AND COMMUNITY CONSTRUCTION IN PHILIPPIANS

Steven J. Kraftchick

The Epistle to the Philippians presents an easier task to an editor than almost any of St. Paul's Epistles. The readings are for the most part obvious: and only in a few passages does he meet with very serious difficulties of interpretation.¹

There are quite a number of unsolved problems in Philippians, some of which may be unsolvable. For instance, the wish for a wholly specific answer to the question of Paul's aim or aims in writing the letter is likely to remain unfulfilled.²

INTRODUCTION

Given its brevity compared to Paul's other epistles, Philippians poses more than its fair share of interpretive problems. Determining its origin (Rome or Ephesus), its date of composition, and its literary integrity (one letter or a composite) still remain open questions. Questions also arise when one considers the letter's contents. For example, the origin, structure, and role of the Christ hymn (2:6–11) remain matters of debate. Similarly, assuming that one grants that Paul's remarks in 3:2–3 and 3:17–18 were part of his original letter, the exact nature of Paul's opposition cannot be determined with any significant detail.

Similar issues arise when one asks why Paul sent the letter. Some take a "no purpose" view, that is, Paul simply wrote because he wanted to communicate with a church with which he shared an intimate relationship,³ but more typically scholars have taken one of three paths. Some argue that there is one overriding concern or theme that dominates the

¹ J. B. Lightfoot, *Saint Paul's Epistle to the Philippians* (London: Macmillan and Co., 1881), viii.

² Troels Engberg-Pedersen, *Paul and the Stoics* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2000), 81.

³ Gerald Hawthorne lists eight reasons why Paul wrote, concluding that Philippians is a personal letter, "it is like a chat, the subject matter changing without notice as in an informal conversation between friends" (*Philippians* [WBC 43, Waco: Word, 1983], xlvii–xlviii).

letter. For example, in his 1742 notes on the epistle for his *Gnomon Novi Testamentum* Johann Bengel offered that Philippians could be summed up in the phrase, “*Gaudeo, gaudele*” (“I rejoice, you rejoice”).⁴ A second group attempts to determine the letter’s purpose by focusing on particular matters that Paul mentions, such as Paul’s present circumstances, or specific issues in the church’s social makeup.⁵ A third approach is taken by scholars who are wary that the reconstructions required by the second approach will lead to “mirror reading” or undue speculation. Thus, these analysts suggest that we should read Philippians as a specific instance of a rhetorical or epistolary genre. These approaches have the apparent advantage of allowing a comparison with other letters or speeches, but they also have their weaknesses. Even when one can confidently identify an epistolary form and explain the letter’s particular expressions as the result of its ancient epistolary type, the reasons why Paul sent just this type of letter remain must still be reconstructed.⁶

Troels Engberg-Pedersen’s observation about attempts to determine the purpose of Philippians sums up the situation nicely. He notes,

[The] problem seems to be this: either a scholar will fix on a fairly restricted motif as *the* theme of the letter—but then too many things will be left out; or else the scholar will include many specific motifs—then the problem becomes that of seeing how they on their side are to be

⁴ Johann Bengel, *Gnomon of the New Testament* (ed. A. R. Fausset; 5 vols.; Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1860), 4:121.

⁵ These include challenges posed by Paul’s so-called opponents (3:2–21), a thank you for the Philippians monetary gift (4:10), an apology for his imprisonment (1:12–26), to address internal divisions and strife within the congregation (4:2), to help the Philippians understand their suffering (1:29–30), and to console them in their distress. On the latter, see Paul Holloway, “Notes and Observations: *Bona Cogitare*: An Epicurean Consolation in Phil 4:8–9,” *HTR* 91 (1998): 89–96.

⁶ A brief comparison of various analyses illustrates the issues. See Loveday Alexander, “Hellenistic Letter-Forms and the Structure of Philippians,” *JNT* 57 (1989): 87–101; L. Michael White, “Morality Between Two Worlds: A Paradigm of Friendship in Philippians,” in *Greeks, Romans, and Christians: Essays in Honor of Abraham Malherbe* (ed. D. L. Balch, E. Ferguson and W. A. Meeks; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1990), 201–15; Stanley Stowers, “Friends and Enemies in the Politics of Heaven: Reading Theology in Philippians,” *Pauline Theology, Volume 1* (ed. J. M. Bassler; Minneapolis: Fortress), 105–21; and John T. Fitzgerald, “Philippians in the Light of Some Ancient Discussions of Friendship,” in *Friendship, Flattery, and Frankness of Speech: Studies on Friendship in the New Testament World* (ed. J. T. Fitzgerald; Leiden: Brill, 1996), 141–60. All of these authors argue for interpreting the letter in relationship to ancient epistolary types. John Reumann concludes that while Paul makes use of friendship motifs and language, he did not write a formal letter of friendship (“Philippians, Especially Chapter 4, as a ‘Letter of Friendship’: Observations on a Checkered History of Scholarship,” in Fitzgerald, *Friendship, Flattery, and Frankness of Speech*, 105).

combined; a final possibility is to fix on a single, specific, but very general motif (like ‘the gospel’), which may hopefully cover everything else—but that only leaves the scholar with the further task of spelling out exactly how it does cover all the rest.⁷

Since the letter resists attempts to fit all of its claims and functions into one fixed pattern or idea and resists yielding to epistolary analogs, determining *the* purpose of Paul’s letter is likely to remain, as many questions about the letter, a matter of unresolved debate.

In this essay I wish to occupy an investigative space between the two extremes Engberg-Pedersen notes. I will offer one overarching task for the letter, but tie it to more than one verse or idea from the epistle. Thus, with apologies to him, my work, to use one of Carl Holladay’s favorite expressions, will not attempt to “pull the stitches tighter,” but rather, attempt to loosen them just a bit.⁸

THE PROBLEM OF COMMUNAL SELF-UNDERSTANDING IN PHILIPPIANS

In this essay I will argue that, among other things, Paul was writing to correct the Philippians’ communal self-understanding. He wrote to remind them of their distinct identity and to help them maintain this identity in the face of social pressures that put their identity at risk.

Paul attempted to address the Philippians’ communal identity by presenting and reflecting on his own identity in Christ. Paul’s self-references provide the Philippians with a human model for developing their own understanding of Christian citizenship, and subsequently, for constructing strategies to maintain their communal Christian identity in the midst of societal pressures that threatened its ongoing existence.

Self-referential language permeates this letter.⁹ The presence of such language is typical of Paul’s letters; what is striking is the degree to

⁷ Engberg-Pedersen, *Paul and the Stoics*, 86.

⁸ Usually Holladay’s maxims should not be ignored and this is not the first time I have done so, perhaps to my detriment. I am very pleased to offer an essay for this volume and thank the editors for their invitation and gracious help. Carl Holladay has been teacher, mentor, colleague and friend. I appreciate the opportunity to express my gratitude to him for our relationship, professional and personal.

⁹ The self-presentation takes three forms: (1) expressions of Paul’s feelings towards the Philippians (1:7–8; 2:16–18; 4:1, 10–20) or against those who would harm them (3:2–6); (2) descriptions of his present circumstances and future hopes (1:12–14, 18–26, 29–30; 3:12–16); and (3) reflections on his past (3:7–16).

which Paul makes reference to himself in this letter. In fact, one scholar has called Philippians “Paul’s most egocentric letter.”¹⁰

Scholars offer different reasons for this characteristic of Paul’s letter. Some note that self-referential remarks were usual elements of certain types of ancient letters. Loveday Alexander, for example, argues that Philippians is a family letter and that these letters typically included news of one’s circumstances and future plans.¹¹ L. Michael White, Stanley Stowers, and John Fitzgerald consider Philippians an instance of a “friendship letter” and suggest that the self-references reflect elements of the friendship motif.¹² These connections to ancient letters can make sense of some of Paul’s self-references, but hardly do justice to all of them (for example, their use in chapter three or Paul’s remarks about being a libation poured out for the Philippians, 2:17). Paul’s self-references go far beyond news and stretch the category of friendship beyond a useful heuristic level.

Others argue that the material is a function of historical circumstances, but here too the opinions vary widely. Thus, while Brian Dodd suggests that Paul used these references to offer himself as a moral exemplar for the Philippians,¹³ Robert Fortna argues that even though Paul wrote *to* the Philippians, he was really writing to gain clarity about his own dilemma. Thus, the self-references do not serve the Philippians’ parenetic needs, but reflect an odd form of self-administered therapy for Paul’s own preoccupations.¹⁴

¹⁰ Robert Fortna, “Paul’s Most Egocentric Letter,” in *The Conversation Continues* (ed. Beverly Gaventa and Robert Fortna; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1990), 219–30.

¹¹ Alexander, “Hellenistic Letter Forms,” 92.

¹² Interestingly, while all three agree that such remarks are typical of the genre, they disagree on the reason why Paul includes these statements. Stowers argues that the letter was written to change the Philippians’ understanding of friendship through displaying Christ as Lord and friend (“Friends and Enemies in the Politics of Heaven,” 119). Fitzgerald argues that Paul wrote to adjust their understandings of friendship expectations and establish friendship on a higher, ideal plane (“Philippians in the Light of Some Ancient Discussions of Friendship,” 157). White argues that Paul wrote to reclaim or reestablish them but on grounds different from those typical of patronage (“Morality Between Two Worlds,” 214–15).

¹³ Brian Dodd, *Paul’s Paradigmatic ‘I’: Personal Example as Literary Strategy* (JSNTS 177; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1999).

¹⁴ According to Fortna, even though the letter appears to be directed to the Philippians, the real object of the exhortations was Paul himself. Apparently Paul was so preoccupied with the possibility of his own premature death that he used the occasion of this letter to make sense out of it for himself. Not yet understanding suffering and unconditional grace as he does in 2 Corinthians, Paul fears his fate and seeks solace in comparing it to Christ’s own early death (“Paul’s Most Egocentric Letter,” 221).

Were one to explore fully Paul's use of self-references, the study could follow a number of different avenues, including his use of "ἐγώ," the relationship of "I" and "we" as well as passages where self-reference is implied by way of contrast or comparison with others. In this study I will limit myself to the passage where Paul's self-referential remarks are most explicit: 3:2–16.

The image Paul develops in chapter three is intended not simply to combat opposition, but as a model of behavior and thought that the Philippians must develop for themselves. This is clear in 3:17 where Paul calls them to imitate his life, however, he means by this not simply to reenact his actions, but to adopt the "practical wisdom" that enabled him to take these actions. The remarks in chapter two already signal this. Paul's insistence on "thinking" (the repeated use of φρονέω), rather than simply on doing, shows that a proper disposition must be in place to ensure correct actions. Paul's use of "citizenship" language at 1:27 and 3:21 add evidence that constructing a communal understanding is one of his primary goals for the letter. The Philippians were struggling to maintain their distinction as a Christian community. Paul's self-presentation along with his sharp observations about those outside the Christian association were intended to help them develop strategies for negotiating their relationships to one another.¹⁵

Paul's stated desire for the Philippians begins with his opening prayer that their love will abound "with knowledge and full insight to help you determine the things that matter in order that you might be blameless and pure at the day of Christ" (1:9–10). This same eschatological goal is expressed elsewhere in the letter (2:12–13, 16; 3:21), suggesting that

¹⁵ Wayne Meeks reflects on Paul's use of the "man from Heaven" myth in Philippians and notes the frequency with which Paul uses the verb φρονεῖν. He suggests that "although Paul does not use the noun, we may say with some cogency that this letter's most comprehensive purpose is the shaping of Christian φρόνησις, a practical moral reasoning that is 'conformed to Christ's death in hope of his resurrection'" ("The Man From Heaven in Paul's Letter to the Philippians" in *The Future of Early Christianity: Essays in Honor of Helmut Koester* [ed. B. A. Pearson; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1991], 333). Meeks further suggests that in Paul's mind, "[t]his practical reasoning ought to issue in a civic life (πολιτεύεσθαι) 'worthy of the gospel of Christ' (1:27) and therefore not the civic life of the ordinary πόλις, the arena of classical Greco-Roman ethics, but that of the heavenly πολιτεύμα" (ibid.). Like Meeks, I am arguing that Paul is helping the Philippians to think, not simply telling them what to do. That is, he calls them to be "citizens of heaven" worthy of their call (1:27; 3:21), but in doing so he is not dictating their constitution. Instead he is offering them a means by which to develop this constitution on their own. As I will suggest, the portrait is intended as an implication of the ethics that they must develop, not as a replacement for that activity.

Paul wants the Philippians to understand the nature of their calling and live by it. This desire is also signaled by Paul's references to a "heavenly citizenship" (τὸ πολίτευμα ἐν οὐρανοῖς),¹⁶ his emphasis on "standing firm in the Lord" (στήκετε ἐν κυρίῳ), and "holding firm to the word of life" (λόγον ζωῆς ἐπέχοντες, 2:16), as well as his admonition "to hold fast to what they had obtained" (στοιχεῖν, 3:16).

All of these remarks suggest that the pressures the Philippians experienced in their daily existence affected their ability to live faithfully as a Christian community (cf. 1:28; 2:14). Paul's desire for the Philippians to develop proper thought and action should be understood as a response to the forces and experiences that threatened their existence as a distinctive community of Christian faith. Paul appears to be concerned not only about the Philippians' ability to understand themselves properly, but to survive as a community.

I am not suggesting that there was a major crisis confronting the church in Philippi (such as there was in Galatia) but that like the church in Thessalonica, the Philippians faced a daily and steady pressure from their non-Christian neighbors. Were we afforded the opportunity to view the Philippian church, we would not see very much: a small group of people, numbering perhaps sixty or less, with no visible temple or designated meeting space, no representations of its deities, no recognized social feast days or rituals, no civic sponsors, and no connection to the city's history. To most of Philippi's citizens it would have appeared as a small, odd group, quite literally on society's margins. Most likely, at some moments, it would have appeared this way to the Philippian Christians themselves.

However, since they were not only Christians, but also members of the larger society, the Philippian Christians could not have avoided comparing their status to other groups in the city. Doing so, they would have been influenced by Philippi's colonial standing and by the social status markers of the wider culture, and they would realize that their church did not fare well on such measurement. Consequently, the Philippians could not help but question the reality of their beliefs and their real

¹⁶ Andrew Lincoln has shown that the "meaning of πολίτευμα which is best attested in Hellenistic times and which best fits the context in this passage is that of 'state' or 'commonwealth', but that the particular nuance we have found in its usage should also be remembered here, that is, the state as constitutive force regulating its citizens. In this way something of the interplay between 'constitution' and 'state' is retained" (*Paradise Now and Not Yet* [SNTSMS 43; London: Cambridge University Press, 1981], 99).

value socially.¹⁷ In and of itself this challenge, though significant, could be met, but, when coupled with fissures in the church (4:2–3) and the dismay caused by Paul’s possible demise (1:12–30; 2:17–18), the cumulative effect threatened the long range sustainability of the community.¹⁸ This weariness required Paul to provide the Philippians a way to combat it.

Thus, taking seriously Fitzgerald’s comment that the letter to the Philippians could have, and likely did, serve more than one purpose,¹⁹ it appears that Paul made use of the letter to provide the Philippians with a communal “constitution” by which they can guide themselves in both their internal life and in their relationships to those outside their communion. In doing this he prepares them to be a self-sufficient and mature community capable of responding faithfully to the vicissitudes of everyday life up to and including their current suffering.

PAUL’S THEOLOGICAL TASK

Katherine Tanner’s arguments concerning the tasks and responsibilities of theological reflection can help us understand why this goal was necessary and to see more clearly the task Paul faced in writing the Philippians.²⁰ According to Tanner, Christian groups are voluntary associations whose members are drawn from the larger society, “and like what happens in an association and not in a separate society, the character of those outside activities also infiltrate it.” Since groups are not physical objects, but entities composed of individuals with numerous

¹⁷ On the social location of the congregation see, Mikael Telbe, “The Sociological Factors Behind Philippians 3.1–11 and the Conflict at Philippi,” *JST* 55 (1994): 92–121; PHEME PERKINS, “Theology for the Heavenly Politeuma,” in Bassler, *Pauline Theology Volume 1*, 89–104; and Craig Steven de Vos, *Church and Community Conflicts: The Relationships of the Thessalonian, Corinthian, and Philippian Churches with Their Wider Civic Communities* (SBLDS 168; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1999), 233–87.

¹⁸ My conception of the situation is similar to that of Moises Silva, who suggests that the Philippians “were facing great adversity, had lost their sense of Christian joy, and were tempted to abandon their struggle. Accordingly, this letter places great weight on the need to stand fast and persevere” (*Philippians* [2nd ed.; Grand Rapids: Baker, 2005], 21–22. We differ in that Silva points only to a vague notion of “weariness” and I am suggesting the reasons that this weariness has arisen.

¹⁹ Fitzgerald, “Philippians in the Light of Some Ancient Discussions of Friendship,” 144.

²⁰ Katherine Tanner, *Theories of Culture: A New Agenda for Theology* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1997).

social connections, in the main there are no real breaks that demarcate one social group from another: "Christians may have partaken of meals together, but Christian communities were not literally where they made their bread. Christian communities might have been a family in many ways but nobody was literally born and raised there."²¹

The Christian community lives and works among people who do not share its convictions, yet it relies upon them for civic and social necessities such as food, education, and governmental structures. These very connections place pressures on the community to define itself and to declare boundaries between itself and the larger society. However, the simple fact of declaration does not resolve the matters of identity. Defining boundaries is only an initial step in clarifying the group's identity and identifying activities. A boundary must not only be declared, it must be interpreted, that is, the "distinctiveness of a Christian way of life is not so much formed *by* the boundary as *at* it; Christian distinctiveness is something that emerges in the very cultural processes occurring at the boundary, processes that construct a distinctive identity for Christian social practices through the distinctive use of cultural materials shared by others."²²

When the Christian community involves itself in the process of self-identity and differentiation, it is involved in an interpretive enterprise. It is better to think about the boundaries of the Christian community less in terms of *what* than in terms of *how*. That is, the differences between the Christian community and its wider context are not found in the practices of each *per se* but in how those practices are understood. It is for this reason that Paul must provide a constitution for the community.

Paul's presentation of his own manner of negotiating these boundaries is part of his overall attempt to provide the Philippians a hermeneutic for entering into "definitions at the boundaries." Tanner suggests that the need for definition arises when the group is trying to make judgments about what is or is not a Christian practice or belief, when it faces internal disagreements and must deal with them in order "to stay the fissiparous effects of contentiousness."²³ The need also arises

²¹ Ibid., 97–98.

²² Ibid., 115.

²³ Here Tanner refers to Paul's attempts to deal with fissures in the church at Corinth. She notes, "Thus, Paul asks about the character of Christian lives, about the shape that Christian practices takes, in order to prevent the breakup of Christian communities" (ibid., 94).

when situation-specific differences in social practice jeopardize claims about the group's unity or when there is a shift in the status of the group in relationship to the wider society. In order to continue in its religious life the community must answer such questions, and if it does not have a proper means of adjudication, it is paralyzed. That is, it needs a means for interpretation. This is what Paul is attempting to provide for the Philippians.

There are clear analogies between Tanner's suggestions and the condition of the Philippian church when Paul wrote. The repeated call to "be of the same mind" coupled with the specific exhortation to Euodia and Syntyche suggests that some form of dissension or community fissures were in play among the Philippian congregants. Further, it is clear from the reference Paul makes to the Philippians' "societal opposition" (τῶν ἀντικειμένων, 1:28) and his identification of the outside society as "a crooked and perverse generation" (γενεᾶς σκολιᾶς καὶ διεστραμμένης, 2:15) that the question of how the Philippians are to co-exist with their non-Christian neighbors is a matter of concern. Moreover, the warnings in chapter three that refer to proper understandings of righteousness (v. 9), eschatological expectation (vv. 10, 13–14), and identity marking practices (vv. 3–4) suggest that questions about what constitutes Christian practice and belief were live questions for this congregation.

Given this complex nature of the Christian culture and given the difficulty that is before it in determining its identity, it is not odd to think that the Philippian church faced genuine difficulties. When one adds to this the nascent reality of the church, the potential loss of its founder, its relative minority status in the wider community, and its internal strife, it seems clear that one of Paul's goals had to have been to help the church as it attempted to understand itself internally and in relationship to its larger context.

PAUL'S SELF-PRESENTATION

One indication that maintaining a distinct identity was a problem is that in three instances Paul is adamant that the church must recognize the profound differences between it and the surrounding society (1:27–30; 3:4; 3:17). The vigor of these remarks and the stark contrasts they create between the church and its neighbors suggest that Paul saw this as a major challenge for the church.

Quite likely other religious and civic groups also presented genuine options for how the Philippians could conceive of themselves as a part of the society. One should include in this respect the appeal of the outsiders and enemies to which Paul refers in 3:2 and 3:18–19. Paul allows that neither the beliefs nor the actions of these groups provide a true model for the Philippians and insists that they reject them as possibilities. However, the rejection of these groups does not solve the problem of what the Philippians should be, so Paul must provide them with a structure and guidelines that will.

This contrast between legitimate and illegitimate group constitution is amplified by Paul's distinctive use of citizenship language in Philippians (1:27–30; 3:20). Nowhere else in the other genuine letters does he use these terms and one presumes that by employing them here he is signaling one of the issues for the congregation, namely, differentiating itself sufficiently in relationship to other civic and religious institutions in Philippi. The congregation needs to develop an understanding of itself as a community in Christ and determine overarching guidelines for its decisions and structure.

Paul provides some help for this in his rehearsal of God's eschatological actions among and for the Philippians. Throughout the letter he embeds the question of identity in the larger scale of God's purposes and plans. For instance, the letter opens with a prayer to the God who has begun a good work in them (1:6) that the Philippians will be filled with sufficient knowledge and love that they will appear blameless on the day of Christ (1:6, 10). On the basis of God's continuing actions, Paul calls on the community to accept its responsibility to "work out its own salvation" (2:12–13). Unlike those released from Egypt, the Philippians are to be the people of God who serve without "murmuring or arguing" (2:14). Paul also reminds them by means of the hymn in chapter two and his warnings in chapter three that they have only one Lord (Christ) and that they are subject to him.²⁴ We should thus read Paul's repeated exhortations to "stand fast" (στεκέω, 1:27; 4:1) and to "hold fast to the word of life" (ἔπείχω, 2:16) as appeals to remain faithful

²⁴ The Christological tone of the letter is unmistakable. The term "Christ" or "Jesus Christ" is used thirty-seven times in the letter and the hymn fragment at 2:6–11 forms the basis for Paul's commendations of himself, Timothy, and Epaphroditus. Perhaps more significantly the only other epithets used for Christ are σωτήρ (once at 3:20) and κύριος, which occurs sixteen times. This emphasis on κύριος is reflected in the final phrases of the hymn when Christ is exalted and given the name κύριος (2:9–11).

until the eschatological day of redemption, when God will bring that work to completion.²⁵

Paul provides the Philippians with help primarily through his appeals to character. The central character is Christ's, displayed by Paul's recital of the hymn in 2:6–11. There the pattern of voluntary dispossession of status that is vindicated by God is presented as the disposition that all Christians must possess. However, because of the unique nature of Christ's own choice and God's responsive actions, the pattern cannot function simply as an ethical pattern.²⁶ No one disputed that Christ should be emulated; the question was how that actually could occur in one's everyday existence. Paul insists that it could and that the pattern of Christ's act should function as the template by which true discipleship can be discerned and displayed. In this regard he presents himself (1:12–26), Timothy (2:19–24), and Epaphroditus (2:25–30) as examples of those who have embodied the heavenly order of reality and shown that this mode of life can be maintained.²⁷

THE SELF-PRESENTATION IN 3:2–21

Paul's most sustained self-explication is found in chapter three, particularly vv. 2–21. One can approach the chapter from different directions: as an interpolation, an interlude, or as integral to Paul's rhetorical designs.²⁸ When it is viewed as an interlude, interpreters consider Paul's

²⁵ See James W. Thompson, "Preaching to Philippians," *Int* 61:3 (July 2007): 299. This doubt was likely caused by the Philippians' responses to outside pressures and internal division (*ibid.*, 299, 301), but Paul's own circumstances and a quite natural "spiritual fatigue" also played a role in the Philippians' struggles to maintain their community.

²⁶ Cf. the cautionary remarks of Ernst Käsemann, "A Critical Analysis of Philippians 2:5–11," in *God and Christ: Existence and Province* (New York: Harper and Row, 1968), 45–88.

²⁷ Cf. Stephen Fowl, *The Story of Christ in the Ethics of Paul* (JSNTS 36; Sheffield: JSOT, 1990); and Steven J. Kraftchick, "A Necessary Detour: Paul's Metaphorical Understanding of the Philippians Hymn," *HBT* 15 (1993): 1–37.

²⁸ I rule out interpolation, since I believe the letter to be a unified whole. The second is feasible (Carl R. Holladay, "Paul's Opponents in Philippians 3," *ResQ* 3 [1969]: 77–90). However, there are enough linguistic links to chapter two, thematic links to other aspects of the letter, including "practical wisdom," suffering, and transformation to suggest that chapter three is part of the overall argument. See, esp., David Garland, "The Composition and Literary Unity of Philippians: Some Neglected Factors," *NovT* 27 (1985): 141–73. One of the most troubling aspects of the letter is the sudden shift at 3:2 and the odd statement in 3:1 that Paul is not weary of repeating the same advice, which can be a "safeguard" for the Philippians. The phrasing is difficult, but Victor Furnish's suggestion that 3:1a be taken as a close to the first part of the letter and that

opposition to be his main audience, and thus interpret the discussion of righteousness and Paul's earlier life as shaped by that context. However, the language of the section and Paul's references to the Philippians in vv. 2, 13, and 17 suggest that they remain the primary audience of these remarks. This chapter is therefore fundamental to Paul's overall purposes and not simply a matter of rebutting other teaching. My intent is to focus on how Paul employs various contrastive logics in this self-presentation to offer the Philippians a model for the Christ pattern expressed in 2:6–11.²⁹

While the arguments in chapter three form one discourse, the individual parts can be delineated by means of the contrasts that Paul draws throughout the entire section.³⁰ The overriding motif of the passage is one of contrast: contrasts drawn between the Philippians and the unnamed but dangerous opponents (vv. 2–3), between Paul and the opposition (vv. 4–7), between Paul's former existence and his life under the lordship of Christ (vv. 8–11), and between the life pattern of the opposition and the pattern evident in Paul's and the Philippians' existence (vv. 17–21). Beyond this there are also contrasts between Paul and some members of the Philippian congregation concerning true perfection (vv. 12, 15), contrasts between present and future (vv. 20–21), and a contrast between earthly and heavenly world orderings.

The passage begins and ends with references to the opposition (vv. 2, 18–19) who are explicitly contrasted with the Philippians (vv. 3, 20, as indicated by the use of the personal pronouns *ἡμεῖς* and *ἡμῶν*). Paul's contrasts function not only to refute his opposition, but also to make certain that the Philippians understand the nature of *their* present existence. The knowledge of Christ in the present is not simply one of unalloyed power and triumph. If the opposition is offering a way to "overcome" present circumstances by appeals to Christ's power, Paul

3:1b introduces the more specific warnings to come, helps to clarify its function in the letter; see "The Place and Purpose of Philippians III," *NTS* 10 (1963–64): 80–88.

²⁹ Understanding who the opposition might have been and what they might have taught would help in this, but all we can rely upon are Paul's own characterizations, and these are clearly polemical. At the least we know that the opposition is suggesting some inclusion of Jewish ritual as part of Christian faith (vv. 2–3) and that their ideas promote some sense that eschatological transformation is a present reality (vv. 12, 15, 21). Beyond that one enters into more tenuous identification than the evidence will bear.

³⁰ Jane Lancaster has pointed out the ubiquity of contrast in the letter as a whole ("Inhabiting the New Land: Semantic Tension and Theological Purposes in Philippians" [paper presented at annual meeting of the SBL, New Orleans, November 1996]).

is clear that this power is presently experienced in the “fellowship of his sufferings.”³¹ In the present time, the reality of Christ’s power does not take one out of human existence, but is experienced in it. It is an existence of faith because full conformity to Christ is an eschatological reality not yet available.

The opening contrast (vv. 2–3) uses a triple repetition of the command to watch out (βλέπετε) which, combined with the virulence of Paul’s epithets, suggests that he is doing more than making a mild reference “to consider” the possibility of danger.³² There is sharpness to Paul’s tone, for he believes that these other teachers are a real threat to the community, even if they are not physically present. The Philippians are to “beware” of the potential presence and influence of such teachers.

Each imperative is followed by the definite article and the use of a word beginning with “*kappa*.” Together these create a rhetorically forceful sentence. The three polemical epithets are meant as sarcastic reversals of the claims likely made by the “Judaizing” missionaries. Instead of bringing ritual purity, they are “dogs” whose practices defile. Instead of bringing “good works” of Torah, they are labeled as “the evil workers,” and, in a deliberately insulting wordplay (κατατομήν-περιτομή), Paul insists that instead of performing the sacred rite of circumcision that initiated Jewish males into the covenant of faith, these teachers are actually mutilators who will cause exclusion from the children of God.

These epithets are reversed when Paul refers to himself and the Philippians in the next verse. Emphatically, and in opposition to those just mentioned, Paul asserts that it is the Philippian Gentiles who are the genuine circumcision.³³ The use of ἡμεῖς γάρ ἐσμεν governs the rest of the descriptive terms. Not only are the Philippians *the* circumcision,

³¹ Paul has already shown this with references to his own experiences in prison (1:12) and to the efforts of Epaphroditus (2:25–30), but the primary form of such existence is Christ’s who as a human being experienced humiliation and death.

³² Contra the arguments of Johnson, (*Writings of the New Testament*, 377) and Stowers, (“Friends and Enemies in the Politics of Heaven,” 116) who translate βλέπετε with the mild “observe.” See Peter O’Brien, *The Epistle to the Philippians* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1991), 353–54, for a discussion of the passage that argues for the stronger imperative.

³³ O’Brien suggests that Paul uses “the circumcision” here as a collective to signify that the Gentile converts are the covenant people of God even though they do not bear the sign of old (*The Epistle to the Philippians*, 358).

they are also *the* ones who do service to God by the spirit, who boast solely in Christ Jesus, and who place no confidence in the status markers of the flesh (3:3).³⁴

The contrast between Paul (and the church) and the other teachers is intentional and is based on the reversal he will mention in vv. 7–8. Because of the advent of Christ, typical rituals and status have been overturned, indeed made obsolete. The real servants of God are not those who point to physical marks or public evidence, but those who are called into being by God's Christ and who are inspired and made dynamic through the spirit.³⁵ If one allows that these remarks are intended for the Philippians as well as the opposition, then they are being told that any external definition of the group's identity is inappropriate unless it is based on a relationship with God.

In vv. 4–6 Paul shifts the objects of contrast and focuses directly on himself. He repeats the idea of "confidence in the flesh" but does so in order to show the futility of such activity (v. 4). Paul can argue that he has more reasons to be confident in this regard than any one else, as the emphatic "I" and the use of "I even more" suggest (v. 4). Paul lists seven grounds for boasting in the flesh; the first four relate to his heritage, the last three to his achievement. He begins by referring to his own circumcision on the eighth day, which demonstrates his full obedience to the law. He follows this with three references to his lineage, all connected by the use of the preposition ἐκ: "from the stock of Israel," again emphasizing his superior rank to those who only later joined the people of God; "from the tribe of Benjamin," a tribe regarded for its status;³⁶ and "a Hebrew of (ἐξ) Hebrews." This last claim is arresting because Paul is likely referring to himself as a child of Hebrew parents. His claim is that even if he was raised in the Diaspora, he was a Jew versed in the Hebrew language, raised in the ancient traditions, who read the Torah in its original language. He was not therefore, tainted

³⁴ O'Brien notes the chiasmic relationship between the last two clauses of the verse which emphasize that the real basis of identity is through Jesus Christ and not by external marks (*ibid.*, 362–63).

³⁵ Already in this initial part of the polemic Paul is directing his readers away from the visible markers of present existence to the reality that transcends them. In so doing he anticipates the conclusion of the section in 3:20–21 and begins to shift the readers understanding of their status and situation. They are not governed or defined by this world, but by the pattern of existence defined by heaven and displayed in the action of Christ.

³⁶ Cf. Markus Bockmuehl, *The Epistle to the Philippians* (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1998), 196.

in any way by his Hellenistic surroundings, but a Jew who maintained his religious purity.³⁷

The next three claims are each introduced by the preposition *κατά*. The references are now to Paul's performance as a Jew. Again in every regard he is superior to the adversaries: "with respect to the law a Pharisee," "with respect to zeal, a persecutor of the church," "with respect to righteousness through the law—blameless." Through the rhetorical force of this presentation Paul epitomizes the very things that the teachers point to; he can in no way be found lacking according to their standards, for he exceeds them and so he defeats his adversaries on their own grounds, by their own claims.

When he boldly identifies these "flesh" markers and achievements as "loss" (*ζημίαν*), the contrast is all the more striking. The contrast cannot be missed. Though Paul can, on the basis of human status markers, stand proudly before anyone, having been grasped by God's revealed truth in Christ, these markers are revealed as devoid of value. The opposition cannot compare their own accomplishments to those of Paul without acknowledging the degree to which they are substandard. Moreover, if Paul, who exceeds them in every form of pedigree and devotion, understands his own achievements as loss, then so must they since they possess lesser degrees of status.³⁸ Implicit in this is also a charge to the Philippians. To pursue status or identity on the bases of external markers is an exercise of futility and bad faith.

With v. 7 the form of contrast shifts again, from external markers to the grounds for their evaluation. No longer are old identity markers being compared; now they are discounted and the real difference between Paul and the opposition is underscored. While the other teachers still place value in the markers of the flesh, Paul has come to understand that they are worthless. He has "come to know Christ" and this knowledge simultaneously reveals the true nature of human achievement and rank. Because of Christ (*διὰ τὸν Χριστόν*) all things are re-oriented. Christ is of worth, not human achievement or social status, and Christ is to be sought (*ἵνα Χριστὸν κερδήσω*). Christ

³⁷ Ibid.; cf. O'Brien, *The Epistle to the Philippians*, 372.

³⁸ Cf. O'Brien, *The Epistle to the Philippians*, 366. "By using himself as an example, and thereby drawing attention to the fact that he possessed, before his conversion, all the advantages that his Judaizing opponents were claiming in order to place their confidence in the flesh, the apostle was able to show that boasting in Christ was all that mattered. This was 'the pith of Christianity'; it was true for every Christian, not simply for an apostle, and thus vital for the Philippians themselves."

creates in Paul a new identity. The new gain is Christ and the new goal is Christ alone.³⁹

Once one understands the nature of God's act in Christ, human achievement must be re-classified. Better, it is now possible to categorize it properly. It never had the capacity that the opponents claimed, or Paul once thought. Now one is able to see that and rightly evaluate it. It can no be longer understood as that which qualifies one before God, but ironically as that which can disqualify one. Again there is a message for the Philippians. To succumb to the desire for social status is to reject the only reason for their existence as a group.

The reasoning of v. 7 is explicated in the single sentence that forms vv. 8–11, signaled by use of ἀλλὰ μενοῦγε καὶ. Then, with the shift in the tense of ἤγεομαι from the perfect in v. 7 to the present tense in v. 8 (repeated twice) and the amplification of what “knowing Christ” means, Paul adds to the contrasts by distinguishing between his initial recognition of Christ and the pursuit of a deeper manifestation of Christ in his present life. The perfect tense in v. 7 shows that the epistemological and existential shift occurred once for all, but the present tenses in v. 8 show that it is still in play, even as Paul continues as a believer in Christ, who is now referred to not only as Christ, but “my Lord,” the one to whom all allegiance is owed and by whom one is governed.

The contrast found in vv. 4–7 is still in view, but now it is applied to all aspects of life. It applies not only to Paul's present situation, but to any sense of human achievement. In comparison to “knowing Christ,” everything is not only “loss” (ζημίαν), but “offscouring” or “dung” (σκόβαλα). Through the contrasts in vv. 4–7 Paul demonstrates that the markers the other teachers took as sure signs of spiritual development and belief in Christ were false and inapplicable. Prior to v. 8 Paul used the contrasts to distinguish himself from the opponents, but in v. 8 he asserts that this change in his understanding of reality, which revealed that all (πάντα) of his human gains and identity markers are loss, is the interpretive lens for all human activity.

With v. 8 Paul focuses the attention of the audience not only on his own response but on the one that they too must make. By stressing the inclusive “everything” Paul includes the lives of his Gentile con-

³⁹ Hawthorne recognizes the future element in this verse. As he notes, there is “the sense that Paul has both gained Christ and is yet to gain Christ” (*Philippians*, 140). This is made explicit in vv. 12–16 where Paul focuses on the present as a form of “stretching forward” to the future. The goal of Christ remains ahead, not behind the believer.

gregants. The shift is not restricted to the status markers of Judaism, but to all status markers. Thus, no standing in Greek or Jewish society, no relationship to Rome, no sense of privilege because of origin or heritage can be counted as gain in regard to Christ. The Philippians are to understand, that as Paul's sense of reality was transformed, so too must theirs be.

Verse 9 continues the ἵνα clause begun in v. 8. Whereas in vv. 7–8 the emphasis is on the “loss” that knowing Christ has entailed, in vv. 9–11 the focus is on the “gain” that being in Christ is and will be. They amplify the idea and clarify the nature of this reality. Gaining Christ is equivalent to “being found in him” (an appeal to its eschatological status). However, to be found “in Christ” means to have been placed there not on his own merit, that is, “not having a righteousness of my own through obedience to the law,” but by “the righteousness from God established upon faith.” The last phrase, ἐπὶ τῇ πίστει is parallel to the earlier phrase τὴν διὰ πίστεως Χριστοῦ, but the meaning is shifted slightly. In the first instance, the righteousness is based on the faithfulness of Christ, his obedient descent unto death. In the second phrase the faith is that expressed by the believer in trusting that Christ's faithfulness is sufficient before God.⁴⁰

Verse 10 has the same sense. “To know Christ” in this context is equivalent to “gaining Christ” (v. 8) and to “being found in him” (v. 9). Here, however, the knowledge is given specific content. Paul wishes to know “Christ” and “the power of Christ's resurrection” and “the fellowship of his sufferings.” To know Christ is to experience the power of resurrection, not above suffering, but in its midst. This is indicated by the fact that “resurrection” and “fellowship” share the same definite article. Again, the Philippians must hear overtones of their own experiences (1:29). To rejoice in Christ is not only to believe in him, but to share in his sufferings. To know the power of the resurrection is to live by the pattern of existence displayed by Christ. This is the intent of the last phrase of the verse, “to be conformed to his death.” The participial phrase συμμορφιζόμενος τῷ θανάτῳ αὐτοῦ uses the

⁴⁰ The entire section is a terse and compact set of expressions. For a full explication of the alternative translations and the parallel constructions, see O'Brien, *The Epistle to the Philippians*, 393–400, 415–417. Differently, see Silva, *Philippians*, 159–61; and Hawthorne, *Philippians*, 141–42. The opposing sides of the issues are well described by R. B. Hays, “Justification,” *ABD* 3: 1129–1133; and James D. G. Dunn, “Paul and Justification by Faith,” in *The Road From Damascus: The Impact of Paul's Conversion on His Life, Thought, and Ministry* (ed. R. Longenecker; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 85–101.

language already found in the Christ hymn (2:6, 8), and Paul wishes the Philippians to make this connection. The defining element of knowing Christ is the experience of his power when one is shaped by the descent/ascent pattern.⁴¹

The sentence ends with v. 11 and Paul's desire to be part of the "resurrection from the dead." The verb *καταντάω* conveys the idea of movement toward a goal (this idea is picked up in vv. 12, 14).⁴² The expression "if somehow" is not intended to convey doubt about this possibility (v. 9; cf. 1:23; 3:20–21), but that of current expectation and the recognition that resurrection is not yet a full reality. Paul is sure of his participation in the resurrection; what he does not know is the path that will lead him there.⁴³

In vv. 12–16 Paul amplifies the future aspects of resurrection existence. The contrasts are now applied to the Philippians' present existence of "not yet" compared to the reality that awaits them. Throughout the discourse the Philippians have been listeners. If in the first part of chapter three they were "overhearing" Paul's response to opposition, they were still to listen and apply the remarks to their own existence as v. 8 implies. However, in vv. 12–16 the Philippians are Paul's direct audience. Once again he refers to "*ἀδελφοί*" and singles out those who consider themselves as "already perfect". If Paul, their apostle, does not yet consider himself to have arrived or to have achieved a state of "perfection" (v. 12), then it is hard to imagine that his audience members have. Moreover, if Paul lives toward the future reality and not in regard to the past, so too should the Philippians.

⁴¹ As Hawthorne points out, this "knowing" goes beyond cognition to intimate experience: "Hence, when Paul speaks of his desire to know Christ he does not have in mind a mere intellectual knowledge about Christ (Paul had that when he was persecuting the church). Rather, he is thinking about a personal encounter with Christ that inaugurates a special intimacy with Christ that is life-changing and on-going..." (Hawthorne, *Philippians*, 143).

⁴² BAGD, s.v. *καταντάω*.

⁴³ O'Brien notes, "The resurrection is certain; the intervening events are uncertain" (*The Epistle to the Philippians*, 413). Cf. Lincoln, *Paradise Now and Not Yet*, 93: "The force of the *εἰ πῶς καταντήσω* at the beginning of the verse is similar. It has nothing to do with his uncertainty or humility in view of impending death but underlines the very different view of the resurrection that he has in comparison to the opponents, his lack of any presumption to have experienced full salvation already. These verses (vv. 10, 11) take us to the heart of the discussion concerning the relation of suffering and glory, of earthly and heavenly modes of existence for the believer, a discussion which surfaces again in v. 21."

What then are the marks of present faithful existence? According to Paul they are “διώκω, ἐπεκτείνομαι, σκοπὸς, βραβεῖον, all [of which] indicate a race which is in progress and in which there can be no dwelling on what has been achieved (τὰ ὀπίσω) because the prize is yet to be obtained.”⁴⁴ Now is not a moment of perfection, but one that still includes relationships of suffering. Now is not a moment of certainty for Paul or the Philippians except for the certainty of God’s goal. Thus, in this moment the faithful response is “straining for what is ahead” (ἐπεκτείνω) and “forgetting what is behind” (ἐπιλανθάνω). This remark repeats in performance language the claims of v. 7 that were made in terms of epistemology. One looks not to the marks of status defined by the flesh or the world, but to the upward call to which one truly belongs. Perfection is an eschatological goal, not a historical reality. Discipleship is a constant move into the future and a vision oriented to the “upward call” (v. 14) that is likely connected to the ideas in 3:20 concerning the commonwealth in heaven.⁴⁵ This leads to the climatic point of the chapter, Paul’s admonition to be “co-imitators with him” in v. 17.

With vv. 17–21 the self-identification as model is made explicit and, as in v. 13, the audience is again specifically addressed. The Philippians are to imitate Paul and those who accept this pattern of reality. The word that Paul uses (συμμιμηταί) is peculiar and is found nowhere else in the Greek literature of the period.⁴⁶ The oddity is in his use of the prefix since he does use the simple noun form elsewhere in his letters with reference to his own behavior (1 Cor 4:16; 11:1; 1 Thess 1:6). A natural sense of the term is that Paul wishes the Philippians to be fellow imitators with him, of Christ.⁴⁷

⁴⁴ Lincoln, *Paradise Now and Not Yet*, 93.

⁴⁵ The prize is the “upward calling,” which Lincoln rightly identifies as heavenly existence that is experienced but not fully attained in this life, but “is the goal for which we aim, the prize that lies ahead at the end of the race. For Paul this could include both the thought of being with Christ (cf. 1:23) whom he conceived of as in heaven, and the ultimate putting on of heavenly existence in the glorification of the body (cf. 3:21)” (ibid., 94).

⁴⁶ BAGD, s.v. συμμιμητής.

⁴⁷ Hawthorne, allowing that more than one interpretation is possible, has suggested that the term could be translated “become fellow imitators of me,” focusing on the unity of the Philippians following Paul’s mindset in Christ (*Philippians*, 160). This fits with the earlier admonition to be of one mind, and there is no reason to see the two interpretations as incompatible.

The call to imitation is followed immediately by a contrast between the Philippians and those who live as the “enemies of the cross.”⁴⁸ Here too there is a reminder of the hymn, especially of 2:8. It is in the cross that Christ’s full obedience is found and it is to the “fellowship of Christ’s sufferings” that Paul aspires. Earlier in the letter he intends his own death to be understood as a magnification of Christ, and as a witness to the truth of Christ’s cross (1:21–26). Now he names others who are enemies of the cross. Presumably these are people who fail to understand the nature of Christ’s death or who attempt to avoid the suffering that results from witnessing to Christ; they are people who wish to attain perfection (to know the power of his resurrection) but not through the fellowship of his suffering. They divide what Paul insists is a unity in this life and so, although they claim perfection (τέλειοι), their end (τέλος) is destruction (ἀπώλεια) (3:19).

Through a series of juxtaposed terms Paul describes the enemies: their glory is made equal to shame, their god is the belly, and they think only in and about earthly things.⁴⁹ Just as he had contrasted the opposition to the Philippians to start the section (v. 3), so now he makes a contrast between the Philippians and the enemies of the cross.

Four intertwining contrasts occur in these verses. First, the use of φρονοῦντες recalls the use of the same participial form in 2:2 and the use of the verb φρονεῖτε in 2:5. In other words, in contrast to the enemies of the cross who have a mind directed to and by earthly realities, the Philippians are to adopt the mind of the Christ who died on the cross, that is, the heavenly constitution. A second contrast that follows from this one is the spatial shift between ἐπίγεια and πολιτεύμα. Again, the force is the same: the enemies are governed by an existence of earthly ordinances and status, but the Philippians are citizens of a different reality and hence they are constituted and governed by that reality, which means that they must adopt this Christ pattern (sanctioned by God, 2:9) for their present existence.

⁴⁸ “His polemical tactics here remind one immediately of vv. 2, 3 where he had proceeded in almost exactly the same way. In the last part of v. 2 Paul had called the opponents the opposite of that which they claimed and had then used the very title of which they had boasted for himself and Pauline Christians (ἡμεῖς γὰρ εσμεν ἡ περιτομή). The same emphatic word order is followed here in v. 20—the first person plural pronoun, then γὰρ and then the claim. This parallel with the earlier part of the polemic provides a strong indication that here in v. 20 also the apostle is taking over a catchword of his opponents” (Lincoln, *Paradise Now and Not Yet*, 97).

⁴⁹ Ibid., 96.

Third, there is a temporal contrast that recalls the eschatological reservations of 3:12. Although the Philippians are now heavenly citizens, the full measure of that existence is yet to come. The current state is one of expectation; the Philippians await (ἀπεκδεχόμεθα) a Savior, who will come from heaven and change (future tense: μετασχηματίσει) their present bodies. With the last clause there is a final ontological contrast between the σῶμα of humiliation and the σῶμα of glory. Only at Christ's appearance will the full transformation of their "lowly bodies" into "Christ's body of glory" occur. Thus, the existential reality is controlled by the temporal one and it is this gap between citizenship now and full transformation that explains why the present form of discipleship is to "share in Christ's sufferings."

AN IMPLIED CONSTITUTION

The fact that Paul presents himself as a model for the Philippians is not unusual; he does this in many of his letters. Typically when Paul uses arguments of character it is in the context of defense or apology. Thus, he makes great use of autobiography in his letter to the Galatians and appeals to his character throughout 2 Corinthians. In 1 Corinthians and Romans he refers to himself as someone to be imitated. In Philippians, however, this element of contention is missing. In fact, quite the opposite situation exists. The Philippians are Paul's "crown and joy" (4:1), and he has a passion for them like that of Christ (1:8). On their part the Philippians hold Paul in their heart (1:7), they pray for his deliverance (1:19), and have been partners with him since the beginning of his mission (4:15). Clearly Paul does not have need to commend himself to the Philippians or to argue that his authority as an apostle should be accepted. If they are not employed to argue that the audience should accept Paul or trust him, then what role do the self-referential remarks play in this epistle?

An answer to this question can be found if we view them in the light of Aristotle's treatment of proofs from character (ἥθος) in his *Rhetoric*.⁵⁰ By suggesting this I am not arguing that Paul was a trained rhetorician or that he was bound by Aristotle's theory of rhetoric (or, for that matter, any ancient theory of rhetoric) in his letter writing. Rather, I

⁵⁰ See esp. *Rhet.* 1.2.3–5; 2.1.5–7.

intend only that Aristotle's comments on character proofs can be used as a baseline for interpreting Paul's remarks.

There are three reasons for thinking that the *Rhetoric* can be of help. First, Paul uses Aristotle's terms for describing the components of an effective character. According to Aristotle, to mount an effective proof from character a speaker must demonstrate that he or she possesses φρόνιμος (practical reason),⁵¹ ἀρετή (virtue),⁵² and εὖνοια (goodwill).⁵³ Second, Aristotle explicitly locates the *Rhetoric* in the context of deliberating civic/communal behavior and make-up, that is, a society's constitution (πολίτευμα).⁵⁴ In fact, he insists that effective rhetoric is a function of shaping an argument in light of a community's constitutional commitments. Third, Aristotle distinguishes a speaker's character from that of the audience and he argues that an effective speech enables an audience to adjust its self-understanding in light of the speaker's presentation of his or her character.

In Philippians Paul makes use of all of these characteristics of ἦθος argumentation. In addition to Paul's extensive use of the verb φρονέω, he also refers to matters of virtue and instances of his goodwill. He connects this idea to proper life in Christ by twice referring to the idea of citizenship (1:27; 3:20); also he makes direct reference to him-

⁵¹ Paul does not use the noun φρόνιμος in Philippians, however the verb φρονέω is used ten times in the letter (1:7; 2:2 [twice]; 2:5; 3:15 [twice], 19, 4:2, 10 [twice]).

⁵² Cf. Phil 4:8, where Paul also makes reference to several other virtues found in Greek moral thought: truth, the honorable, justice, purity, the pleasant, the commendable, and excellence.

⁵³ Paul does not use the term "goodwill" (εὖνοια) in the letter. However, with this term Aristotle means demonstrating that the speaker has the audience's best interests in mind. This is clearly indicated by Paul when he notes that he "holds them in his heart" (1:7), wishes to help them to determine that which is most desirable (1:10), and longs for them with "the compassion of Christ" (1:8). Further, though he himself desires to die and be with Christ, he is convinced that he will live so that he can continue with the Philippians in the progress and joy in the faith (1:25). Finally, he identifies the reason for writing to them as a "safeguard" (ἀσφαλές) for their well-being (3:1). Moreover, at the end of the section where Aristotle describes these three qualities, he connects εὖνοια with φιλία (*Rhet.* 2.1.7). As numerous scholars have pointed out, φιλία or "friendliness" is a hallmark of this letter. Thus, one way to explain the numerous references to friendship in the letter is to consider them as a part of Paul's character portrait and not simply because he is writing a "friendship letter." See the discussion of Stowers, White, and Fitzgerald above.

⁵⁴ The connection of character to the community ethic is made at *Rhet.* 1.8.5. The manner in which character is a function of communal values is demonstrated ably by Eugene Garver, *Aristotle's Rhetoric: An Art of Character* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), 18–51; idem, "ἦθος and Argument: The ἦθος of the Speaker and the ἦθος of the Audience," in *Papers on Rhetoric III* (ed. L. C. Montefusco; Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing, 2000), 113–26.

self as a model (τύπος) for the Philippians to follow (3:17). In the last instance Paul is quite clear: he calls on the Philippians to consider his example of suffering as a guide for their own perseverance (1:27–30), he admonishes them to follow the things that they have learned from him and seen in him (4:9), and he concludes the autobiographical reflections in chapter three with an explicit call to be “co-imitators with him” in living for Christ (3:17).

These linguistic and thematic examples bear similarities to Aristotle’s remarks on the construction and use of ἥθος. However, whereas Aristotle argued that the community’s ethos determined the shape of the speaker’s character proofs, in Philippians the community’s ethos is to be determined and developed on the basis of Paul’s character presentation. In effect, Aristotle’s calculus is reversed in Paul’s letter, allowing him to create “living space” for the community’s deliberations about its identity as “citizens of heaven.”⁵⁵ Thus, the self-presentation is not a matter of Paul creating a character argument about himself, but of his using the ἥθος construction in order to imply the shape of the larger *civic construction* in which both he and the Philippians dwell. By it he wishes to show that the Christ pattern, while unique, as he has embodied it in action and thought, can also be paradigmatic for the Philippians and in so doing they can begin to develop their own understanding and form of a “heavenly constitution.” This will ensure that they continue in a relationship with God that will result in their final transformation.

CONCLUSIONS

Four conclusions can be drawn from our review of Paul’s efforts at community construction. First, Paul’s purpose in writing the Philippians includes an attempt to help the church develop a sense of Christian

⁵⁵ I have in mind the idea developed by Michael J. Hyde in his introduction to a collection of essays from a conference held on the notion of ἥθος. The participants were asked to reflect on a more “primordial” meaning of the term ἥθος, namely, “the way discourse is used to transform space and time into ‘dwelling places’ (*êthos*; pl. *êthea*) where people can deliberate about and ‘know together’ (*con-scientia*) some matter of interest. Such dwelling places define the grounds, the abodes or habitats, where a person’s ethics and moral character take place and develop” (*The Ethos of Rhetoric* [ed. Michael J. Hyde; Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2004], xiii); cf. Calvin O. Schrag, *Communicative Praxis and the Space of Subjectivity* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1986). Through the construction of his own ἥθος Paul provides the Philippians with a model for the development of their own.

civitas. To do this he has presented himself as a model of one who has adopted the “mind of Christ,” intending for the Philippians to adopt this same understanding of their own existence. This allows the Philippians to imitate Paul, but it also allows them to see that their existence in Christ ultimately is not based on Paul but the authority of the one whom Paul attempts to know. Their existence as a Christian community was sustained not by the apostle, but by the God he served. In doing so Paul makes himself “obsolete.”

Second, if the community heeds Paul’s remarks, they will come to understand that the relationship they have entered into with God transcends all human constructs and therefore can withstand any and every vicissitude of this-worldly existence. When they comprehend that “fleshly” status markers are of no merit before God, they are free from the pursuit and dependence on such markers. They have no need to rely on any external means of evaluation, but simply enact the constitution of Christ’s founding actions.

Third, as the comparison to Aristotle suggests, Paul’s presentation implies an ethic for the community; not one that is dictated in detail, but one that sets out a foundation for community identity. This is the “heavenly *πολίτευμα*” understood as a reality to which the Christian is committed and one that constitutes his or her existence.

Finally, the comparison of Paul’s work in the epistle with the task of theology as Tanner defines it enables us to see that the establishment of a Christian community within the wider society is an ongoing and necessary process. To the degree that this was true for the Philippians, it remains true for the contemporary church. Paul insisted that the Philippian community of faith take seriously the drama of Christ as its hermeneutic, and this appears as essential for a contemporary community’s continued distinct existence. This drama forces the church to enter the theological task of definition at the boundaries; to neglect it is to adopt the definitions of the world around it, something Paul claimed was tantamount to forfeiting its true stature before God.

If, then, we allow that Paul’s purposes for the letter included a self-presentation for the purpose of demonstrating the contours of a community ethic, then in the case of Philippians at least, we can admit that loosening the stitches may actually be an instance of pulling them just a bit tighter.

HOW TO TREAT OLD WOMEN AND OLD MEN: THE USE OF PHILOSOPHICAL TRADITIONS AND SCRIPTURE IN 1 TIMOTHY 5

Abraham J. Malherbe

The three Pastoral Epistles are classified variously, for example, as church orders, paraenesis, or *mandata principis*. Yet they all have the purpose of moving their readers to particular behavior, and in this respect can find room under the large umbrella of moral exhortation.¹

The content of this exhortation is, for the most part, unremarkable from the perspective of Greco-Roman moral literature, as are the literary forms and hortatory devices used.² Yet the author's knowledge of moral philosophy is not as superficial or spotty as it has frequently been characterized as being, nor is his appropriation of it as mindless and devoid of argumentation as is frequently alleged.³ In an earlier article, I suggested that the author of the Pastorals wrote in the persona of an old man, and adduced evidence, frequently from the moralists, to support my argument.⁴ In this article, in keeping with Carl Holladay's interest in Scripture and tradition, I wish to extend that discussion of the Hellenistic moral traditions about old age and examine whether they illuminate the quotation of Scripture in 1 Tim 5:18–19 in its literary context. My examination of the two traditions, moral philosophical and Scriptural, will be illustrative rather than exhaustive. It will be useful to begin with some observations on Scripture.

¹ See Abraham J. Malherbe, "Paraenesis in the Epistle to Titus," in *Early Christian Paraenesis in Context* (ed. James Starr and Troels Engberg-Pedersen; BZNW 125; New York: de Gruyter 2004), 297–317, for discussion and bibliography.

² See Abraham J. Malherbe, "The *Virtus Feminarum* in 1 Timothy 2:9–15," in *Renewing Tradition: Studies in Texts and Contexts in Honor of James W. Thompson* (ed. Mark W. Hamilton, Thomas H. Olbricht, and Jeffrey Peterson; Princeton Theological Monographs; Eugene: Pickwick, 2006), 46–65.

³ See Abraham J. Malherbe, "Christ Jesus Came into the World to Save Sinners: Soteriology in the Pastoral Epistles," in *Salvation in the New Testament: Perspectives on Soteriology* (ed. Jan G. van der Watt; NovTSup 121; Leiden: Brill, 2005), 331–58.

⁴ Abraham J. Malherbe, "Paulus Senex," *ResQ* 36 (1994): 197–207.

SCRIPTURE IN THE PASTORAL EPISTLES

Here and there in the Pastoral Epistles the author offers an explicit warrant for his directions, a case in point being the appeal to Scripture in 1 Tim 5:18–19. In view of 2 Tim 3:14–17, this appeal to Scripture does not surprise, for there Timothy is portrayed as having been grounded in the Scriptures from early childhood, probably by his mother and grandmother (2 Tim 1:5). The Scriptures are described as having the capacity to make one wise for salvation through faith in Jesus Christ, but in greater detail it is said that inspired Scripture is useful in teaching, reproof, correction, training in righteousness, making the man of God fully fitted out for every good work. This is the kind of activity in which the author himself engages,⁵ and which he directs his readers to pursue.⁶ As to his own teaching, he writes as an apostle of Christ (1 Tim 1:1; 2 Tim 1:1; Titus 1:1), whose appointment to the task gives authority to his instruction,⁷ whether in person or letter (1 Tim 3:14), convinced that what he urges is acceptable to God (1 Tim 2:2; 5:4). What is striking is that only once, in 1 Tim 5:18–19, does he explicitly appeal to Scripture to support his instructions.⁸

The author's directions to Timothy and Titus similarly do not appeal to Scripture, with the exception of the statement in 2 Tim 3:15–17. So it is Timothy, nurtured on the words of faith and traditional teaching, who is to instruct the church in the moral life.⁹ Even the seemingly programmatic statement in 2 Tim 3:15–17 is preceded by a command to continue in what Timothy had learned and believed during his infancy and youth, and later from Paul (2 Tim 3:14; cf. 3:10). Scripture is part of what has been transmitted to him. So also the moral directions Titus is to give (Titus 2:1–10; 3:1–2) are not undergirded by Scripture but

⁵ E.g., in 1 Tim 2:1–2, 8–15; 4:7–10; 6:9, 11–12; 2 Tim 2:1–7; 2:22–23.

⁶ E.g., in 1 Tim 4:11–16; 5:1–2, 7, 20; 6:3, 17–21; 2 Tim 2:14–15, 24–26; 3:10–17; 4:1–6; Titus 1:13; 2:1–10; 3:1–12, 8b–11.

⁷ E.g., 1 Tim 1:12–17; 2:7; 2 Tim 1:1–14; 3:10–14.

⁸ The closest other possible citation is 2 Tim 2:19. Allusions to biblical narrative are made in 1 Tim 4:3–4; 2 Tim 3:8–9, and the influence of the OT on the language of the letters is evident throughout (see Hans Hübner, *Vetus Testamentum in Novo* (3 vols.; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1997), 2:583–657. The subject is treated exhaustively in Gerd Häfner, *Nützlich zur Belehrung* (2 Tim 3, 16): *Die Rolle der Schrift in den Pastoralbriefen im Rahmen der Paulusrezeption* (Herders Biblische Studien 25; Freiburg: Herder, 2000).

⁹ See 1 Tim 4:6; cf. 1 Tim 5:8; 6:20–21; 2 Tim 1:13–14.

by intricate christological formulations which are heavily indebted to traditional teaching (Titus 2:11–14; 3:3–7).¹⁰

1 TIMOTHY 5:17–19 IN LITERARY AND SOCIAL CONTEXT

This study will lead to a brief examination of 1 Tim 5:17–19. There are different opinions on what constitutes the literary context of 1 Tim 5:17–19. While it is generally agreed that a new section of text begins with v. 17, it is disputed whether the section extends to vv. 19, 20, 22 or 25.¹¹ The syntax of vv. 17–25 contributes to the lack of certainty. The syntax primarily consists of a string of individual directions in the imperative and of asyndeton broken only once by a connective particle (γάρ in v. 18). Such a style, in which commands unrelated to each other, sometimes gnomic in character, as here, is characteristic of some Greco-Roman moral discourse.¹² Absent a syntactically tight connection between these verses, attempts have been made to discover whether the contents of the individual verses reveal a theme or themes that witness(es) to a coherence in what appears at first glance to lack cohesion.¹³ Given the Pastoral Epistles' indebtedness to the moral philosophers, it is reasonable to read this section of chapter five with an eye open to that tradition of moral instruction.

For the purpose of this essay, it is not necessary to treat the problems of cohesion at length. For the sake of perspective, however, it will be useful to begin by placing 1 Tim 5:17–19 in its literary setting.

The section of the letter that interests us begins in 4:11 with a command to Timothy to charge and teach his hearers and to permit nobody to despise his youth.¹⁴ This initiates a detailed specification

¹⁰ See Malherbe, “‘Christ Jesus Came into the World to Save Sinners.’”

¹¹ See the summary of different viewpoints in Ray Van Neste, *Cohesion and Structure in the Pastoral Epistles* (JSNTSup 28; London/New York: T. & T. Clark, 2004), 60–62.

¹² For criticism of shortness and disjointedness of such speech and the failure to be discursive, see Lucian, *Bis acc.* 28. For caution in such an assessment, see Malherbe, “Paraenesis in the Epistle to Titus,” 299 n. 11.

¹³ The most assiduous criticism of coherence is by James D. Miller, *The Pastoral Letters as Composite Documents* (NTSMS 93; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 85–87, strong opposition to whom is mounted by Van Neste, *Cohesion and Structure in the Pastoral Epistles*, 60–66, who agrees with a large number of commentators that 5:17–25 as a whole deals with elders.

¹⁴ See the extensive discussion by Christopher R. Hutson, “My True Child: The Rhetoric of Youth in the Pastoral Epistles” (Ph.D. diss., Yale University, 1997).

of his duties which concludes the chapter (4:11–16). Chapter five then begins with an introductory directive about how Timothy should treat old and young people of both sexes (vv. 1–2). This is followed by a section (vv. 3–16) which opens with a command to honor “real widows,” then discusses the financial support, behavior, and qualifications of these exemplary older women. They are contrasted to young widows, who are described in unflattering terms. The theme of honor similarly introduces the next section, which deals with the treatment of old men (5:17–22), and the issue of financial support again arises. Honor again surfaces in commands to slaves (6:1–2), which are given after an interjection which deals with Timothy’s health (v. 23) and a comment on the conspicuousness of sin (vv. 24–25).

Our passage thus belongs to a larger context of communal instruction about the relationships between generations of both sexes, and between slaves and their masters, with honor being the leitmotiv and financial support of certain old women and men a concern (4:11–6:2). Our interest is primarily in attitudes toward the old. What the author has to say about the relationships between persons of different age is informed by common attitudes of the day, and we shall observe some of those attitudes reflected in the texts leading up to 5:17–19.

Interest in old age in the Greco-Roman world has grown dramatically during the last decade.¹⁵ Sometimes this interest developed as an offshoot from investigation of the family, the most important unit in ancient society, but it has been abetted by modern society’s preoccupation with the growing number of its own elderly, usually seen as posing challenges to the society at large.¹⁶ New Testament scholars

¹⁵ The situation has changed quite significantly since Tim Parkin’s assessment in 1997 that the elderly had received very little attention (“Out of Sight, Out of Mind: Elderly Families in the Roman Family,” in *The Roman Family in Italy: Status, Sentiment, Space*, [ed. Beryl Rawson and Paul Weaver; Oxford: Clarendon, 1997], 123. The entire article, with fewer references, is reprinted in Parkin, *Old Age in the Roman World: A Cultural and Social History* [Baltimore: Johns Hopkins, 2003].) In addition to the works cited in the footnotes that follow, see esp. Umberto Mattioli, ed., *Senectus: Vecchiaia nel mondo classico* (2 vols.; Bologna: Paitron, 1995); Hartwin Brandt, *Wird auch silbern mein Haar. Eine Geschichte des Alters in der Antike* (Munich: C. H. Beck, 2002); Karen Cokayne, *Experiencing Old Age in Ancient Rome* (London: Routledge, 2003); Marcus Sigismund, *Über das Alter: Eine historisch-kritische Analyse der Schriften über das Alter: περὶ γήραος von Musonius, Favorinus und Iuncus* (Prismata: Beiträge zur Altertumswissenschaft, 14; Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 2003).

¹⁶ See esp. Beryl Rawson, ed., *The Family in Ancient Rome: New Perspectives* (New York: Cornell University Press, 1986); Keith R. Bradley, *Discovering the Roman Family: Studies in Roman Social History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991); Susan Treggiari, *Roman*

have begun to turn their attention to the subject generally and to the Pastoral Epistles in particular.¹⁷

CONTEMPT FOR TIMOTHY'S YOUTH

Possible intergenerational tension surfaces in 4:12. Before instructing Timothy on how to conduct himself in relation to the elderly in general (5:1–2), and to young men and women, and to two classes of old people in particular (5:3–16, 17–22), the aged writer portrays Timothy as a young man who might be held in contempt because of his youth. No specifically youthful acts or proclivities are mentioned as causes for criticism. The command not to countenance any contempt of his youth comes after a command to charge and teach his hearers (v. 11), and the antithesis that follows, where the emphasis lies, directs him to present himself as a model to believers in his speech, conduct, love, faith, and purity (v. 12), thus rather general qualities. It is possible, then, in the absence of anything more specific, that it is his youthfulness in itself that could evoke disdain, or that the very mention of youth in this context would call forth certain negative characteristics generally associated with youth.

Aristotle held a widespread opinion that the young are impulsive, ambitious, and sensual, but on the whole he was more charitable than most of his successors, ascribing young people's behavior to their lack of life experience. Their errors, he explained, are not intentional; the

Marriage: Iusti Coniuges from the Time of Cicero to the Time of Ulpian (Oxford: Clarendon, 1991); Rawson and Weaver, *The Roman Family in Italy*. For an attempt to place the NT evidence in the Roman context, see Carolyn Osiek and David L. Balch, *Families in the New Testament World: Households and House Churches* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1997); more particularly, Margaret Y. MacDonald, "Slavery, Sexuality and House Churches: A Reassessment of Col 3.18–4.1 in Light of New Research on the Roman Family," *NTS* 53 (2007): 94–113.

¹⁷ R. Alastair Campbell, *The Elders: Seniority within Earliest Christianity* (Studies of the New Testament and Its World; Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1994); John M. G. Barclay, "There is Neither Old nor Young? Early Christianity and Ancient Ideologies of Age," *NTS* 53 (2007): 225–41. C. Spicq, *Saint Paul: Les Épîtres Pastorales* (4th ed.; 2 vols.; EB Paris: Gabalda, 1969), 1:147–53, discusses old age under the rubric of the psychology of the author of the Pastorals. (See already Gerhard Hoffmann, *Das Johannesevangelium als Alterswerk: Eine psychologische Untersuchung* [Gütersloh: Evangelischer Verlag "Der Rufer", 1933] More recently, see Abraham J. Malherbe, "Paulus Senex"; and Mona Tokarek LaFosse, "An Anthropological View of Old Age in Early Christian Communities" (paper presented at the annual meeting of the SBL, Washington, D.C., 20 November 2006).

young, rather, act without a sense of proportion, doing everything to excess. Yet their hope for a better future makes them courageous and social (*Rhet.* 1389a2–b16).

A contrast had been made since Homer between the rashness of youth and the wisdom of the old,¹⁸ but by the time of the late Roman republic, intergenerational conflict, always present to some degree in both public and private spheres, had grown very sharp.¹⁹ Widespread stereotypes of youth existed.²⁰ It has been claimed that “the term ‘youth’ was associated with shallowness, foolishness, and ineptitude,” that it appears as a derogatory appellation in the second century BC, and that in the Greek New Comedy the young man is “a spineless, shallow, trivial, often roguish figure,”²¹ who required harsh treatment from the moral instructor.²² It is not unusual to encounter thumbnail sketches of youth that drip with contempt,²³ or a suspicion by the young that they are reprovved by the old out of contempt. To that they might respond with equal contempt, as old men and women would respond if they were treated contemptuously.²⁴

This attitude toward the young leads the author of the Pastorals to address the issue at the outset and to counter it with a command to

¹⁸ See J. G. F. Powell, *Cicero, Cato Maior De Senectute*. (Cambridge Classical Texts and Commentaries; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 147; Cicero, *Sen.* 20.

¹⁹ See Brandt, *Wird auch silbern mein Haar*, 123–24. Cf. Meyer Reinhold, “The Generation Gap in Antiquity,” in *The Conflict of Generations in Ancient Greece and Rome* (ed. Stephen Bertman; Amsterdam: B. R. Grüner, 1976), 15–54, esp. 32–45 (for tension already in Athens, 48–54). See Parkin, *Old Age in the Roman World*, 226–28, for common-sensical judgment on the widespread phenomenon, and 406 n. 101 for bibliography. Parkin had earlier called into question attempts to identify certain periods when such conflict was particularly acute (“Out of Sight Out of Mind,” 139–40).

²⁰ See Hutson, “My True Child: The Rhetoric of Youth in the Pastoral Epistles,” 145–75, detailing youthful lust, drunkenness and gluttony, inordinate attention to appearance, extravagance in spending as in everything else, ignorance, gullibility, easy exploitability, and idealism.

²¹ Reinhold, “The Generation Gap in Antiquity,” 50.

²² See, e.g., John Chrysostom, *Hom. 1. Tim.* 9.2 (PG 62:546): Youth is wild and needs many instructors to make it live purely, who will moderate their treatment of the youth, advising, admonishing young people, instilling fear in them and threatening them, as the occasion arises.

²³ For example, Horace, *Ar.* 161–168; Seneca the Elder, *Controversiae* 1.pref. 8–9.

²⁴ The subject of contempt in psychagogy crops up repeatedly in Philodemus, *On Frank Criticism* (SBLTT 43; Greco-Roman Series 13; introd., transl., and notes by David Konstan, Diskin Clay Clarence E. Glad, Johan C. Thom, and James Ware; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1998): The young do not easily accept correction (frgs. 31; 71), and one’s speech should be adapted to them (Col. VIa). People in general react negatively when they are treated with contempt (old men: Col. XXIVa.10–15; women: Col. XXIIIb), and the young are liable to respond with contempt (fig. 87N).

Timothy to be an example to the faithful. The advice to Timothy in the Pastorals has recently been described as of a sort that was given to young leaders or, more precisely, to Paul's apostolic delegates.²⁵ Regardless of what formal role or position Timothy might be thought to have held, he does appear as an exemplary young man in 1 Timothy, which makes the caution about possible contempt for his youth all the more striking. Adding to the incongruity is that the young Timothy will be expected to give instruction on how the aged should be treated; it was normally *the aged* who gave instruction.²⁶ So, why introduce this striking caution? It may simply be because the author, whether Paul or someone writing in his name, was sensitive to the difficulty caused by Timothy's youth and wanted to get it out of the way before getting to the specific instructions regarding the aged. He does so by advising Timothy to be concerned with his own conduct and development, offering himself as an example, thus to act in keeping with the philosophical tradition that informs the Pastoral Epistles.²⁷ But there is likely more to it.

According to the genuine Pauline letters, Paul assigned difficult tasks to Timothy. In 1 Thess 3:1–10 and 1 Cor 4:17, one of Timothy's functions was to ensure that Paul's converts continued to look to Paul as their example, which was no easy task in the circumstances in which the mandate was given.²⁸ It is understandable that Paul expressed relief and joy when Timothy returned with good news from Thessalonica (1 Thess 3:6–10), and that he wrote to the Corinthians to receive Timothy as they would himself, having no contempt for Timothy (1 Cor 16:10–11).

First Timothy 4:12 differs from these passages in that it is Timothy who is addressed rather than the recipients of the letters (who are addressed only indirectly), and that Timothy rather than Paul is to serve as example. Furthermore, only in 1 Tim 4:12 is Timothy's youth

²⁵ See Malherbe, "Paraenesis in the Epistle to Titus," 297 n. 3 for bibliography.

²⁶ See Ilsetraut Hadot, *Seneca und die griechisch-römische Tradition der Seelenleitung* (Quellen und Studien zur Geschichte der Philosophie 13; Berlin: de Gruyter, 1969), 158–61, 166–68, and further below.

²⁷ For beginning with oneself, see Dio Chrysostom, *Or.* 77/78.40, cf. 38; Epictetus, *Diatr.* 3.22.13; Julian, *Or.* 6.200C–201C.

²⁸ For the imitation/remembrance theme, see Malherbe, "Paraenesis in the Epistle to Titus," 309–11. On the importance of Timothy's report that the Thessalonians "had a good remembrance" of Paul (1 Thess 3:6), see Abraham J. Malherbe, *The Letters to the Thessalonians* (AB 32B; New York: Doubleday, 2000), 207–8. Paul speaks of Timothy's mission in 1 Cor 4:17 to stir the Corinthians' remembrance of Paul in a context in which Paul claims a unique relation with them as their father in the gospel and their example (vv. 14–17), and in which he threatens them (vv. 18–21)!

specified as the object of contempt. Neither element is present in a similar admonition in Titus 1:15. Why, then, is the possible contempt for Timothy's youth introduced here? Since the author will convey his instruction about intergenerational relationships in the church, always fraught with potential tension, through young Timothy, Timothy's youth could be a complicating factor. Why that should be the case is not immediately clear. Was Timothy's youth an actual problem in the context reflected in the letter, raised by disaffected or offended members of the church (for example, the false teachers, young widows, the rich) as a challenge to Timothy? Or does it simply reflect a contemporary intergenerational attitude that the author felt obliged to register in discussing how certain old people should be treated in the church? The latter seems the more likely possibility in view of the ensuing discussion.

We cannot be certain about the actual situation, but we are able to discern how the admonition functions in the text. The author is going to discuss the relationships between various generations in the church, and he clears the decks by warning that the young leader not brook contempt of his youth. Having cautioned against a wrong attitude toward Timothy, he will next proceed to the other side of the ledger, to caution Timothy against incorrect treatment of old people.

“DON'T BEAT UP ON AN OLD MAN”:
ATTITUDES TOWARD THE ELDERLY

The command to Timothy in 1 Tim 5:1 not to strike out at an old man but to exhort him as a father (πρεσβυτέρῳ μὴ ἐπιπλήξῃς ἀλλὰ παρακάλει ὡς πατέρα) introduces the long instruction about responsibilities toward old women and old men and the behavior of slaves (5:3–6:2). The author considers this entire section teaching (διδασκαλία) and exhortation (παρακλήσις) (6:3).²⁹ The command contrasts what should be Timothy's mode of instruction with the contempt he could or did encounter. Rather than retaliate in kind, with ἐπιπλήξις, he is to engage in παρακλήσις, whose content the author then supplies.³⁰

²⁹ The antecedent to ταῦτα in ταῦτα δίδασκε καὶ παρακάλει is the entire section, 5:3–6:2. Cf. Tit 2:1–15, where v. 15, ταῦτα λάλει καὶ παρακάλει, also after communal instruction, forms an inclusio with 2:1.

³⁰ For non-retaliation, see 1 Thess 5:15 and the commentary in Malherbe, *The Letters to the Thessalonians*, 321–22.

This exhortation is part of the fabric of ancient attitudes toward old people.

Such attitudes ran the gamut of possibilities, given the diverse nature of the sources reflecting them and the different times they represent.³¹ The sources available to us are for the most part art, literature and philosophy, thus representing the elite of society.³² But inscriptions, drama, and satire do provide a glimpse of the “kleine Leute.”³³ It is the treatment of the subject by philosophers, particularly Hellenistic moral philosophers, that draw most attention and will figure prominently but not exclusively in this discussion.³⁴

It has been estimated that in the Roman world 5–10% of the population was over sixty years old, the age generally taken as the minimum to be considered old.³⁵ Old age may conventionally have been associated with wisdom,³⁶ but there was a strong strain of negativism toward old age in Greek and Roman literature. The positive attitude toward old age will receive more attention when we turn to 1 Tim 5:17; here we

³¹ See M. I. Finley, “Introduction,” in *Old Age in Greek and Latin Literature* (ed. Thomas M. Falkner and Judith de Luce; Albany: SUNY Press, 1989), 10; Tim Parkin, “The Ancient Greek and Roman Worlds,” in *The Long History of Old Age* (ed. Pat Thane; London: Thames and Hudson, 2005), 31, 43–44.

³² See Parkin, “Out of Sight, Out of Mind”; Brandt, *Wird auch silbern mein Haar*, 13. Brandt is particularly good at using artistic representations; see Paul Zanker, *The Mask of Socrates: The Image of the Intellectual in Antiquity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995).

³³ On the limited value of inscriptions, see Brandt, *Wird auch silber mein Haar*, 158–59; Jens-Uwe Krause, “Antike,” in *Geschichte der Familie* (ed. Andreas Gestrich, Jens-Uwe Krause, and Michael Mitterauer; Stuttgart: Alfred Kröner, 2003), 23–24; see comments on Aristophanes and Juvenal below. On the satirists, see Abraham J. Malherbe, *Social Aspects of Early Christianity* (2nd enlarged ed.; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1988), 20, 117; and on Juvenal, see Parkin, *Old Age in the Roman World*, 80–86.

³⁴ Under consideration come Plato, Aristotle, Cicero, Seneca, Plutarch, and to a lesser degree, Musonius, Favorinus and Juncus. On the philosophical traditions, see Georges Minois, *History of Old Age: From Antiquity to the Renaissance* (Cambridge: Polity, 1989), 53–68; Powell, *Cicero, Cato Maior De Senectute*, 24–30; Parkin, *Old Age in the Roman World*, 60–78.

³⁵ Parkin, *Old Age in the Roman World*, 224 (see esp. 36–56 for a nuanced discussion taking into consideration the value of different kinds of evidence). Brandt, *Wird auch silbern mein Haar*, 159, suggests a more precise and lower 4.5–4.6%. Finley, “Introduction,” 1–2, is more skeptical, claiming that such calculations were futile because the data were epigraphic, and holds that the demographic situation remained unchanged throughout Greek and Roman history. Ancient writers classified life in divisions ranging from three to ten in number, depending partly on their particular interests; the age of sixty is generally accepted as a convenient rule of thumb (Parkin, *Old Age in the Roman World*, 17–26).

³⁶ Parkin, *Old Age in the Roman World*, 44.

focus on some negative attitudes, particularly the views of old men, because of the prohibition in 5:1. Such attitudes were expressed by Greek poets, dramatists, and writers of comedy, especially vividly by Aristophanes, who made the old man the butt of his humor.³⁷

Plato formulated and refuted the complaints against old age in his picture of the ideal old man in *The Republic* (328D–330A). Aristotle, on the other hand, described old age in contrast to the character of the young, mercilessly reciting every imaginable complaint, whether physical, psychological, or social, without the charity he extended to the young (*Rhet.* 1389b).³⁸ But the idealistic portrayal continued, most extensively by Cicero in his essay *On Old Age* (*De senectute*), which adapted Plato's *Republic*.³⁹ Cicero systematically took up four reasons why old age appears to be unhappy,⁴⁰ and in the process dealt with what were commonly considered characteristics of old age (credulity, forgetfulness, carelessness, slothfulness, inertia, loquacity, moroseness, being hard to please, etc.), and countered them. But the derision of old age continued into the early Empire, finding expression in the most vicious litany of physical and mental deterioration by Juvenal (himself an old man!) (*Sat.* 10.188–239). Old women, too, came in for ridicule, in comedy and satire, but especially in art, where the presentation of the drunken old woman became a part of genre art.⁴¹ The stereotyped “old woman is . . . a disgusting, haggard, shrinking, stinking, toothless, and sex-crazed *fellatrix*. As marginalized members of society, old women were especially set apart” and abused.⁴²

³⁷ Campbell, *The Elders*, 80–81. Aristophanes, *Ach.* 676–696 shows how the elders were perceived and unfairly treated; cf. *Nub.* 1321–1332; *Av.* 755–759. See also Thomas K. Hubbard, “Old Men in the Youthful Plays of Aristophanes,” in Falkner and de Luce, *Old Age in Greek and Roman Literature*, 90–113.

³⁸ See also the contrast between the youth and the old man in Horace, *Ars* 161–178.

³⁹ Cicero, *Sen.* 6–8. See Powell, *Cicero, Cato Maior De Senectute*, 110–20, for discussion in some detail.

⁴⁰ “ . . . first, that it withdraws us from active pursuits; second, that it makes the body weaker; third, that it deprives us of almost all physical pleasures; and, fourth, that it is not far removed from death” (treated consecutively in *De senectute* in 10–20, 27–38, 39–66, 67–85; 21–26, on the loss of memory, may be regarded as “a subsidiary point arising from the topic of the old man in public life” [Powell, *Cicero, Cato Maior De Senectute*, 147]).

⁴¹ For art, see Brandt, *Wird auch silbern mein Haar*, 99–100, 109–10.

⁴² The quotation is from Parkin, *Old Age in the Roman World*, 86; see the references and bibliography in notes 118–126 (pp. 349–350). For the abuse of old women, see Cokayne, *Experiencing Old Age in Ancient Rome*, 134–52.

The negative attitude toward old men was expressed in abuse, sometimes physical sometimes verbal. A particular kind of abuse was that of fathers by their sons, understandable in the Roman period because of the *patria potestas*, which kept sons subject to their fathers so long as the fathers lived.⁴³ Aristophanes already describes the tension between an aged father who is treated like a child and beaten by his son.⁴⁴ That violence between the generations was not merely dramatic but real is evident from Plato's *Laws*.⁴⁵

Of greater interest to us is verbal abuse in which the language of violence was used figuratively, as it is in the prohibition, μή ἐπιπλήξῃς (“do not beat up on”) in 1 Tim 5:1.⁴⁶ The primary sense of ἐπιπλήσσειν is “to strike out,” and the word takes on the meaning of “to rebuke, reprove” (BAGD 377), and “to punish” (MM 243). In the moral literature, ἐπιπλήσσειν keeps company with such words as admonition (νουθετεῖν), reproof or rebuke (ἐλέγχειν) of the philosopher or teacher who seeks to correct people, not permitting them to continue living in error (ἀμαρτάνειν). It was received with ill humor.⁴⁷

Writers who strove for precision in defining terms (without always achieving consistency in their definitions) provide insight into how the words were understood. For example, Ps.-Demetrius, in describing the censorious type of letter, says: “The censorious type (ἐπιτιμητικός) is that written with rebuke (μετ’ ἐπιπλήξεως) on account of errors

⁴³ See Minois, *History of Old Age*, 82–83; Beryl Rawson, “The Roman Family,” in Rawson, *The Family in Ancient Rome*, 16–17; Cokayne, *Experiencing Old Age in Ancient Rome*, 152–59; Krause, “Antike,” 132–38.

⁴⁴ Aristophanes, *Vesp.* 736–740, 1354–1357; *Nub.* 1321–1438. Parkin, *Old Age in the Roman World*, 208, makes the apt comment on the former passage: “This is of course a scene from comedy, not a direct depiction of real life, but its ‘humor’ surely lies at least in part in its underlying reality, that an aged father could be treated in this way by his son.” On the latter passage, see Kenneth J. Reckford, “Father-beating in Aristophanes’ *Clouds*,” in Bertman, *The Conflict of Generations in Ancient Greece and Rome*, 89–118, here p. 104.

⁴⁵ Plato, *Leg.* 879B–880D; cf. Aristotle, *Eth. nic.* 7.6.2, 1149b, for striking one’s father as running in the family. See the important work on domestic violence by John T. Fitzgerald (“Early Christian Missionary Practice and Pagan Reaction: 1 Peter and Domestic Violence against Slaves and Wives,” in Hamilton, Olbricht, and Peterson *Renewing Tradition*, 24–44).

⁴⁶ The word in either its noun or verb form occurs only here in the NT. The verb appears in textual variants in Matt 12:15–16 and Luke 2:43.

⁴⁷ See Dio Chrysostom, *Or.* 72.9–10; Clement of Alexandria, *Paed.* 1.9.82.2 (with ἔλεγχος); 10.93.3 (with ἐπιπληκτικός and ψεκτικός); 1.10.94.1 (ἐπιπλήσσειν is also called νουθετεῖν), etc.

(ἀμαρτήμασι) that have already been committed.”⁴⁸ The focus on the errors (ἀμαρτήματα) of the recipients of the speech or letter leads to correction (πρὸς διόρθωσιν) and healing (ἰάσις), in the process creating fear, which causes them not to sin (Clement of Alexandria, *Paed.* 1.8.66.5). Clement, in a veritable lexicon of hortatory terms, summarizes a number of types of speech (νουθέτησις [“admonition”]; ἐπιτίμησις [“censure”]; μέμψις [“blame”]; ἔλεγχος [“reproof” or “rebuke”], etc.), each with an OT example. The effect of heaping up such strings of definitions is to accentuate the harshness of each. In Clement’s list, ἐπιπληξίς is defined as “rebuking censure” (ἐπιτίμησις ἐπιπληκτική) or “censorious blame” (ψόγος πληκτικός). The example (Isa 30:1) demonstrates to Clement that Isaiah is using stinging fear to turn the people to salvation (πρὸς σωτηρίαν).⁴⁹

It was inappropriate for young people to speak to their elders in this way. Lucian has an old man expect a rash young man to rebuke (ἐπιπλήξειεν) him for having the temerity to speak in public by saying, “Your strength is gone, you are in the clutches of old age” (*Heracles* 7). It was completely unacceptable to moral philosophers of the sort appropriated by the Pastoral Epistles that children would rebuke their parents, who frequently represent the elderly, in this manner. The ethical handbook of Hierocles, roughly contemporary with the Pastorals, specifies how children should respect their aged parents and calls attention to the parents’ gratitude for their children’s care:

Nevertheless, if at any time (the parents) err (παρὰμαρτάνοντες)...we should correct them (ἐπανορθώτεον) them, but not, by Zeus, by rebuking them (οὐ μετὰ ἐπιπλήξεως) the way we do subordinates or peers, but by exhorting (ἀλλ’ ὡς μετὰ παρακλήσεως) them, and then not as though they had erred (ἀμαρτάνοντας) in ignorance, but as though through inadvertence they had committed an oversight which they certainly would not have done had they been more attentive. For admonitions (νουθετήσεις), especially those which are drawn out, are painful to old people, and their inadvertence should therefore be cured with exhortation and a certain artfulness (μετὰ παρακλήσεως καὶ τινος φιλοτεχνίας ἰάσις).⁵⁰

⁴⁸ Pseudo-Demetrius, *Epistolary Types* 6 (Abraham J. Malherbe, *Ancient Epistolary Theorists*. [SBLBS 19; Atlanta: Scholars, 1988], 34–35). The sample letter that follows dwells on the gravity of the errors that call forth the harsh speech. See also Stanley K. Stowers, *Letter-Writing in Greco-Roman Antiquity* (LEC; Philadelphia: Westminster, 1986), 133–34.

⁴⁹ The modes of exhortation are given in *Paed.* 1.9.76.1–81.2 (ἐπιπληξίς in 78.1). Clement considers this somewhat modulated manner of exhortation a system designed to inspire fear of him (ἡ περὶ τὸν φόβον αὐτοῦ τεχνολογία), that is the source of salvation (81.3).

⁵⁰ Hierocles, *On Duties*, in Stobaeus, *Anth.* 4.25.53 (4.643, 13–22 Hense). The

We shall return to the subjects of fear and error when we consider 1 Tim 5:20. For the moment, it suffices to note that the command in 5:1–2 is sensitive to the moralists' preoccupation with proper conduct in relationships between persons of different generations and sexes, with the stress on *παράκλησις*, a generally more gentle mode of exhortation that took its precise meaning from its context.⁵¹ Here it is mostly didactic (cf. 6:3). *Παράκλησις* with respect to old women (widows) will be taken up in vv. 3–10, to young women in vv. 11–15, to old men in vv. 17–19, to Timothy in vv. 20–23, and to slaves in 6:1–2.⁵² What remains remarkable in light of the tradition that it is the old men who were to teach and the young to obey,⁵³ is that Timothy, whose youth could be held in contempt, is the one who is to instruct and exhort the church. But he is to do so in the appropriate manner, mindful of his relationship to other members of the family (cf. 3:15, the *οἶκος θεοῦ*). Plato was more specific, requiring that everyone more than twenty years older than oneself be regarded as a father or mother (*Leg.* 879C).

“HONOR WIDOWS WHO ARE REAL WIDOWS”

The didactic exhortation that follows contains no advice on how to relate to young men,⁵⁴ and the advice relating to the old of both sexes is to special classes, “real widows” (vv. 3–10, 16) and old men who perform special functions (vv. 17–20). Advice to slaves (6:1–2) is added to round out instruction to the household (as in Titus 2:9–10), and that dealing with young widows (vv. 11–15) is subsidiary to the instructions to “real widows.” The author explicitly refers to pagan practice in urging readers of the letter to care for the “real widows” (v. 8).

These widows are to be extended honor in material form, as the text makes clear.⁵⁵ Most women could expect to experience widowhood, sometimes repeatedly, during their lives. Women often married

translation, here modified a little, is from Abraham J. Malherbe, *Moral Exhortation: A Greco-Roman Sourcebook* (LEC; Philadelphia: Westminster, 1986), 92.

⁵¹ See Malherbe, *The Letters to the Thessalonians*, 322–24.

⁵² The list in Titus 2:1–12 is more inclusive: old men, old women, young women, young men, slaves.

⁵³ See Plutarch, *An seni* 789E; cf. Campbell, *The Elders*, 82–86.

⁵⁴ The directions in Titus 2:1–10 include the young men, but in the briefest possible manner, τοὺς νεωτέρους ὡσαύτως παρακάλει σωφρονεῖν (v. 6), depending on the rest of the section to provide an idea of what is meant by σωφροσύνη (see Malherbe, “The *Virtus Feminarum* in 1 Timothy 2:9–15,” esp. 48–49).

⁵⁵ See the discussion below of v. 17 for honoring the elderly in general.

men considerably older than themselves, who were likely to die before them, leaving their widows with the option of remarriage. Of the female population, 25–30% were widows, but one cannot generalize about the length of widowhood, except that it could not be assumed to have been a short transition to remarriage or death for all widows.⁵⁶ Legal and social pressure encouraged women of childbearing age to remarry, but the chances of remarriage after the age of 30 declined rapidly. Egyptian census figures show that the majority of unmarried women over thirty were widows, and that the percentage of widows increased dramatically after the age of forty. That the average age of married women has been calculated to have been 32.5 and of widows 52.6, points to a relatively old group of widows. A woman older than 60, the minimum age for a “real widow” (v. 9), could be regarded as very old.⁵⁷

Although there was no stigma attached to remarriage, for some widows, even in their youth, the ideal was to remain single, true to their deceased husbands.⁵⁸ Sometimes, these women would spend decades in widowhood, despite Augustan legislation that required widows of childbearing age (under 50) to remarry, the purpose of marriage being procreation.⁵⁹ Such a woman was often praised in literature and on tombstones (in Latin, as *univira* and synonyms; in Greek, as μόνανδρος).⁶⁰ A reasonable interpretation of the phrase ἐνὸς ἀνδρὸς γυνή (“the wife of one husband”) in v. 9 is that it refers to a widow who did not remarry.⁶¹

⁵⁶ See the splendid work, Jens-Uwe Krause, *Witwen und Waisen im Römischen Reich* (4 vols.; Heidelberger Althistorische Beiträge und Epigraphische Studien 16–19; Stuttgart: Franz Steiner, 1994–1995), upon which all subsequent work on the subject, including my comments, depend (here, esp. 1:67–70).

⁵⁷ See Papyrus Sakaon 40.12–13. The figures for unmarried women, a majority of whom would have been widows, for the decades after forty are startling: 40–49, 46.2%; 50–59, 61.9%; 60–69, 70%; 70+, 87.5% (from Krause, *Witwen und Waisen im Römischen Reich*, 1:68).

⁵⁸ But see B. Kötting, “Digamos,” *RAC* 3: 1018, who records a negative attitude toward remarriage.

⁵⁹ See Pliny, *Nat.* 7.1.61–62. See D. Dalla, “Le fonti giuridiche,” in Mattioli, *Senectus: Vecchiaia nel mondo classico*, 2:300. The age of forty, the more normal terminus for bearing children, also came in for discussion. The repeated imperial legislation met with strong resistance: Hermann Funke, “Univira: Ein Beispiel heidnischer Geschichtsapologetik,” *JAC* 8/9(1965/66): 183–88.

⁶⁰ See Rawson, *The Family in Ancient Rome*, 33–34, esp. 52 nn. 90 and 91; Kötting, “Digamos,” 1018–19.

⁶¹ This translation of the Greek phrase is straightforward enough; differences of opinion emerge in interpretation, which appear, for example in English versions of

The author of the Pastorals wants these Christian widows to be honored by having the church take care of their material needs. The entire section, vv. 3–16, deals with the care of widows.⁶² The author has a somewhat jaundiced view of younger widows, who do not deserve the church's financial support; they are advised to remarry and lead domestically responsible lives (vv. 11–15; cf. Titus 2:4b–5; 1 Tim 2:15). The older widows, however, have two possible sources of support, their own relatives (vv. 4–8) and the church (vv. 9–10, 16). The explicit reference to pagan practice of caring for widowed relatives (v. 8) invites brief examination of that practice.

First Timothy 5:4 encompasses a number of elements from the contemporary concern with support for aged widows: “But if a widow has children or grandchildren, they are to learn first how to show piety (εὐσεβεῖν) to their own household (τὸν ἴδιον οἶκον) and to repay their forebears (ἀμοιβὰς ἀποδιδόναι προγόνους) for this is acceptable before God (ἀπόδεκτον ἐνώπιον τοῦ θεοῦ).”

Care of the elderly was a matter of private rather than public concern; only in the second century AD did legislation require that parents and children support each other.⁶³ It is unfortunate that almost all our evidence has to do with the upper classes, where the needs of widows were not as dire as one supposes they were of the poor, but even well situated widows could find themselves in precarious circumstances.

Widows could not count on inheriting the estates of their husbands, who rather favored their children and grandchildren, in whom resided their hopes and ambitions for the family. Widows might receive legacies from their husbands, but more normally were dependent for support on their grown children. Widows were most frequently taken into the homes of their sons. The benefit of having children was a common refrain in literature. But the arrangement was not a happy one, for children

the Bible: “has been married only once” (NRSV); “has been faithful to her husband” (NIV). The second (unlikely) interpretation already appears in patristic exposition (see Theodore of Mopsuestia, 2.161 Swete). Discussions of the meaning here invoke the meaning of the phrase in the lists of the qualifications of a bishop in 1 Tim 3:2 and Titus 1:6, and of deacons in 1 Tim 3:12. These discussions do not always escape ecclesial interests. See Peter Trummer, “Einche nach den Pastoralbriefen: Zum Verständnis der Termini μιᾶς γυναικὸς ἀνὴρ und ἐνὸς ἀνδρὸς γυνή,” *Bib* 51(1970): 471–84.

⁶² For our present purpose it is not necessary to classify the different kinds of widows that may be envisaged by the author. See Jouette M. Bassler, “The Widows’ Tale,” *JBL* 103 (1984): 23–41.

⁶³ The survey by Parkin, “Out of Sight, Out of Mind,” contains ample references; cf. Krause, “Antike,” 143–48.

frequently refused to meet their responsibility toward their mothers, or did so with ill grace. The following letter from Egypt (second century AD) from one brother to another reflects a not unusual situation:

I hope you are well. I have been told that you are not looking after our dear mother very well. Please, sweetest brother, don't cause her any grief. And if our other brothers talk back to her, you should slap them. For you should act like a father now. I know that you can be kind to her without my writing; please don't be offended by my writing and reprimanding you. We ought to revere (σέβεσθε) as a goddess the mother who has given us birth, especially a mother as good and virtuous as ours. I have written you these things, my brother, because I know the sweetness of our parents. Write and tell me how you are.⁶⁴

Widows, especially among the poorer classes, were forced to support themselves in such occupations as sellers of vegetables or textiles, midwives, and inn-keepers. Working outside the home, in poverty and without the presumed discipline of the male head of a household, they were depicted as alcoholic, lustful, and so forth.⁶⁵

There is a difference between the directions in 1 Tim 5 and its larger social context. In v. 16, the care of widows is to be undertaken by a believing woman (τις πιστή). That women, particularly daughters, should support widowed mothers was not unknown, but we do not know much about it because our sources were written by men, whose interest in women's duties was limited.⁶⁶ The directions about the support of old widows in 1 Tim 5 stand out even more when it is observed that vv. 16 and 4 form an *inclusio*, and that the intervening section therefore likely deals with female support of widows.⁶⁷

⁶⁴ The Greek is printed in *Select Papyri* (LCL), 1:318, 320. This English translation is from Jo-Ann Shelton, *As the Romans Did: A Sourcebook in Roman Social History* (New York: Oxford, 1998), 23. For the domestic situation reflected in the letter, see Adolf Deissmann, *Light from the Ancient East* (trans. L. R. M. Strachan; 1927; 4th German ed., 1923; repr., Grand Rapids: Baker, 1965), 192–97.

⁶⁵ For the topics touched on in this paragraph, see Krause, *Witwen und Waisen im Römischen Reich*, 2:17–29, 82–94, 105–160; more briefly, Krause, “Antike,” 143–48; and Brandt, *Wird auch silbern mein Haar*, 162–64; see also H.-A. Rupprecht, “Die Sorge für die Älteren nach den Papyri,” in *The Care of the Elderly in the Ancient Near East* (Studies in the History and Culture of the Ancient Near East 14; ed. Martin Stol and Sven P. Vleeming; Boston: Brill, 1998), 223–37; C. Gnllka, “Altersversorgung,” *RAC Supplementband* 1(2001), 266–89.

⁶⁶ Thus Cokayne, *Experiencing Old Age in Ancient Rome*, 166–67, who provides some information. Krause, *Witwen und Waisen im Römischen Reich*, 2:29–33 is more extensive. See Herodotus 2.35, contrasting conditions in Athens from those in Egypt, where “sons need not support their parents unless they choose, but daughters must, whether they choose or not.”

⁶⁷ There is no compelling reason why the subject of *μανθανέτωσαν* (“let them

An example of such a woman is found in a Roman inscription from the first century BC in which a man honors his wife, who “was an outstanding example of *pietas*: an unswerving sense of duty, devotion and loyalty to one’s family, friends, country and the gods”: “...Why speak about your affection toward your relatives, your sense of duty (*pietas*) toward your family (for you cared for my mother as well as you cared for your parents?)”⁶⁸

The expectation that parents be treated with reverence, piety, or devotion (εὐσέβεια, *pietas*), shared by 1 Tim 5:4, the letter from Egypt, and the inscription is common in Greek and Roman literature.⁶⁹ The religious dimension, plus the notion that care of parents is a repayment for favors received from them, is illustrated by a number of extracts from philosophers roughly contemporary with 1 Timothy.

Musonius Rufus, in an argument in favor of having many children, says:

whoever is unjust to his own family sins against the gods of his fathers and against Zeus, guardian of the family, from whom wrongs done to the family are not hidden, and surely one who sins against the gods is impious (ὁ δὲ γε περὶ τοὺς θεοὺς ἀμαρτάνων ἀσεβής).⁷⁰

Similarly, Plutarch (*On Brotherly Love* 479F), citing Plato (*Leg.* 717C), claims that

learn”) (v. 4), προνοεῖ (“provide”), ἡρνηται (“denied”), and ἔστιν (“is”) (v. 8) should be taken as masculine when ἔχει (“has”) in v. 16 unambiguously refers to a woman. Furthermore, the faith or denial of the faith is associated with women in vv. 16 and 12; why should it not in v. 8?

⁶⁸ The introduction to the inscription and the translation are both by Shelton (*As the Romans Did*, 292–96, here 294. The inscription is *CIL* 6.1527, 31670 (*ILS* 8393). I owe the reference to John Fitzgerald.

⁶⁹ See Cicero, *Nat. d.* 1.116, and the commentary by A. S. Pease, *M. Tulli Ciceronis De Natura Deorum*. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1955), 1:510–511, esp. for Cicero’s inconsistency, sometimes making *pietas* represent εὐσέβεια, sometimes οὐσιότης; further, H. Bolkestein, *Wohltätigkeit und Armenpflege im vorchristlichen Altertum* (Groningen: Bouma, 1967), 292–93; R. P. Saller, “*Pietas*, Obligation and Authority in the Roman Family,” in *Alte Geschichte und Wissenschaftsgeschichte* (FS Karl Christ; ed. Peter Kneissi and Volker Losemann; Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1988), 393–410; idem, *Patriarch, Prosperity and Death in the Roman Family*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), ch. 5; Parkin, “Out of Sight, Out of Mind,” 130–39 Cokayne, *Experiencing Old Age in Ancient Rome*, 168–70; Mary R. D’Angelo, “Εὐσέβεια: Roman Imperial Values and the Sexual Politics of 4 Maccabees and the Pastorals,” *BibInt* 11 (2003): 139–65.

⁷⁰ Frg. 15 (96,29–98,1 Lutz). See also Musonius, *Epistle to Papatides* 5 (139, 5–11 Hense).

both Nature and the Law, which upholds Nature, have assigned to parents, after gods, first and greatest honour; and there is nothing which men do that is more acceptable to gods (κεχαρισμένον θεοῖς) than with goodwill and zeal to repay to those who bore them and brought them up the favours 'long ago lent to them when they were young'. Nor is there, again, a greater exhibition of an impious nature than neglect of parents or offences against them. (*Frat. amor.* 479F [Helmbold, LCL])

Hierocles uses similar language, but elevates the standing of parents.⁷¹ He specifies in detail the kind of care children are to render their parents. He considers such care a repayment (τὸ ἀμείβεσθαι) for the parents' beneficence to their children (640, 13). Parents are their children's greatest benefactors; they are the images of the gods, who meet our needs and guard our homes (641, 5–8). Children's care for their parents is repayment (ἀπόδοσις) for what the parents did for the children, but the children's actions are of benefit to themselves, "for what gain is so great to a child as piety (εὐσεβέες) and gratitude to his parents?" (641, 15–17).

Philo demonstrates his awareness of the philosophical treatment of the subject in *On the Decalogue*. Animals, he says, provide examples of children repaying kindnesses (ἀμοιβαῖς) they received (113–116). Young birds out of piety (τῷ εὐσεβεῖν) repay their debt to their parents (117). When children provide care for their parents, they do not so much give as repay (οὐ δίδοντας μᾶλλον ἢ ἀποδιδόντας) what is due. "Piety (εὐσέβεια) and religion (ὁσιότης) are the queens among the virtues." They are absent from people who refuse to support their parents. (119)

For parents are the servants of God for the task of begetting children, and he who dishonours the servant dishonours also the Lord (119). Some bolder spirits, glorifying the name of parenthood, say that a father and a mother are in fact gods revealed to sight who copy the Uncreated in His work as the Framer of life. He, they say, is the God or Maker of the world, they of those only whom they have begotten, and how can reverence be rendered (εὐσεβεῖσθαι) to the invisible God by those who show irreverence (ἀσεβοῦντων) to the gods who are near at hand and seen by the eye? (*Decal.* 119–120 [Colson, LCL])

⁷¹ References here are to Stobaeus, *Anth.* 4.25.53, page and line citation of Otto Hense's edition.; English translation in Malherbe, *Moral Exhortation*, 91.

Philo's dependence on writers like Hierocles is clear, but equally clear is that, unlike them, for him parents are God's servants rather than secondary gods.⁷²

The substance of the commands in 1 Tim 5:4 are of a piece with this philosophical tradition, and so is the presence of a theological warrant for those commands. Piety and repayment for benefits received are so closely associated with filial responsibility for the author that he need only give his directions in the most succinct manner possible. The theological warrant is equally brief and formulaic ("For this is acceptable before God"), but comes from a different tradition, a Hebraic one via the worship of the church.⁷³ A similar formula is also used in 1 Tim 2:2–3 as a theological warrant for advice that is thoroughly philosophical in origin. But there the warrant is part of a more extensive theological statement.⁷⁴ Yet the function of the warrant is not appreciably different from Plutarch's statement above that nothing is more acceptable to gods than children honoring their parents and repaying them for their care.

TREATING OLD MEN AS SCRIPTURE REQUIRES

The probes undertaken so far have yielded evidence that the author of 1 Timothy is interested in relationships between generations within the church, and that his treatment of them reflects contemporary discussions of old age. The same interest continues in 1 Tim 5:17–19. Scholars disagree whether 5:17–25 constitutes one unit of text, or whether it is a series of unconnected or at most loosely connected directives. Probably the majority of commentators hold that the entire section, vv. 17–22, deals with elders, and some extend the section to v. 25.⁷⁵

I confine myself here primarily to vv. 17–19, which constitute a unit consisting of two commands, which deal with the treatment of *πρεσβύτεροι* in the church. The first command, to honor certain elders

⁷² See Isaak Heinemann, *Philons griechische und jüdische Bildung: Kulturvergleichende Untersuchungen zu Philons Darstellung der jüdischen Gesetze* (repr., Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1962), 253–54.

⁷³ H.-W. Bartsch, *Die Anfänge urchristlicher Rechtsbildungen* (TF 34; Hamburg-Bergstedt: H. Reich, 1965), 30–33. See Deut 12:25, 28; 13:19; 21:9.

⁷⁴ See Malherbe, "The *Virtus Feminarum* in 1 Timothy 2:9–15," 52.

⁷⁵ See Van Neste, *Cohesion and Structure in the Pastoral Epistles*, 60–63, for a cataloguing of different positions.

with financial support, is undergirded by what is claimed to be quotations from Scripture (vv. 17–18). The second, a warning against accepting casual accusations of an elder, is similarly supported by a quotation of Scripture (v. 19). These two commands are followed by a command to reprove the sinners in public so that the rest might fear (v. 20).

HONORING OLD MEN

The identity of the *πρεσβύτεροι* is much debated, the majority opinion being that they were a group of leaders who had attained official positions as elders in the church.⁷⁶ Support for this view is found in the use of *πρεσβύτεροι* interchangeably with *ἐπίσκοπος* (“overseer, bishop”) in Titus 1:5, 7; an understanding of *προϊστάναι* (v. 17) as meaning “to rule” (NRSV) or “to direct” (NIV); and the laying on of hands (v. 22), taken to refer to the ordination or installation of the *πρεσβύτεροι* to the office of elder.

I think it more likely that *πρεσβύτεροι* here refers to older men regardless of the relationship between *πρεσβύτεροι* and *ἐπίσκοπος* in Titus 1:5, 7. That is clearly the meaning of *πρεσβύτερος* in 5:1, and the treatment of the elderly has been the subject in the succeeding verses. Why should it change in meaning now? It is natural to read v. 17 as continuing the directive in v. 1, as v. 3 continues v. 2. In both cases, directives regarding older women and older men, it is commanded that honor be materially expressed in view of their need (the widows) or the services they render (the older men).⁷⁷

⁷⁶ On this assumption, different categories of such officials could then be identified; see I. Howard Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles* (ICC; Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1999), 610–11; C. K. Barrett, *The Pastoral Epistles* (NCB; Oxford: Clarendon, 1963), 78–79; and the extensive treatment by John P. Meier (“*Presbyteros* in the Pastoral Epistles,” *CBQ* 35 [1973]: 323–45) of possible reconstructions. Joachim Jeremias is the notable exception, holding that all the occurrences of *πρεσβύτερος* in the Pastoral Epistles (1 Tim 5:1, 17, 19; Titus 1:5) refer to old men (*Die Briefe an Timotheus und Titus* [NTD 9; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1963], 36). Barrett thinks that “elders” is not yet technical, but here means “older men” (78). For a critique of Jeremias, see Meier, “*Presbyteros* in the Pastoral Epistles,” 343–44.

⁷⁷ To qualify for support, widows must, among other things, have rendered service in the domestic realm (v. 10). It is not specified what service, if any, they are to render after their enrollment as “real widows,” but one could suppose that they, like all other old women, were to instruct younger women in their familial and domestic duties (Titus 2:4–5). The activities of the older men are described as both past and present (*προεστώτες* [perfect tense: action initiated in the past, continuing in the present], *κοπιῶντες* [present tense]).

The term *προϊστάναι* admits of a wide range of meanings, including to apply oneself to something (e.g., Titus 3:8, 14), to show concern or care for someone (e.g., Rom 12:8; 1 Thess 5:12), and to lead or govern, the meaning that is at issue here. The word occurs earlier in 1 Timothy (3:4–5, 12), where it is used of household management, and used interchangeably with *ἐπιμελεῖσθαι* (“to take care of”), as it does in contemporary ancient literature.⁷⁸ The way in which the old men are exercising their care is made clear by the phrase that follows, introduced by *μάλιστα* (“especially, in particular”),⁷⁹ they preach and teach, and for that are doubly worthy of the honor paid them.⁸⁰

In v. 1, the author warned against negative attitudes toward and harsh treatment of old men. The question of how the church is to relate to old men is picked up again in v. 17: They are to be honored for their service in the Christian community. This talk of honoring the elders takes us once more to ancient discussions of old age.

The claim made in the Justinian legal codification (sixth century AD), “in our society old age is always honored,”⁸¹ reflected a long-held moral conviction. Sparta was regarded as exemplary in this regard. Cicero opined that “nowhere else is so much deference paid to age and nowhere else is it more honored” (*Sen.* 63),⁸² and the Spartan customs were adduced as examples to be followed. According to Xenophon, without reference to Sparta, it was a duty children were taught “by custom and

⁷⁸ Cf. Philip H. Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus* (NICNT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006), 362. See the discussion in Malherbe, *The Letters to the Thessalonians*, 312–14; cf. Herman von Lips, *Glaube-Gemeinde-Amt: Zum Verständnis der Ordination in den Pastoralbriefen* (FRLANT 122; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1979), 127, for a useful collection of references to ancient texts. To these may be added Hierocles, *On Duties* in Stobaeus, *Anth.* 4.18.21; 4.22.24 (5.699, 14; 4.504, 18 Hense); in 4.505, 16–18, *προστασία* and *ἐπιμέλεια* are used together.

⁷⁹ For an interpretation contrary to this traditional one, see Hong Bom Kim, “The Interpretation of *μάλιστα* in 1 Timothy 5:17,” *NovT* 4 (2004): 360–68.

⁸⁰ Thus the rendering of Campbell, *The Elders*, 203, which cuts, perhaps too easily, through complicated speculations about the meaning of *διπλῇ τιμῇ*. For an account of different interpretations, see G. Schölgen, “Die *διπλῇ τιμῇ* von 1 Tim 5,17,” *ZNW* 80 (1989): 232–39; Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 612–14, lists seven. The phrase should not be taken literally but figuratively, in a superlative sense; thus Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 363–64.

⁸¹ *Digest* 50.6.6 (5) praef. See Dalla, “Le fonti giuridice.”

⁸² Respect for the Spartan customs is reflected in the preservation of an anecdote illustrating their superiority. In addition to this passage in Cicero, it appears in Valerius Maximus (*Facta et dicta mem.* 4.5. Ext. 2) and in Plutarch ([*Apoph. lac.*] 235C). Even old women were honored by the Spartans, much to the disapproval of Aristotle. (*Pol.* 1269b32–1270a16); see Brandt, *Wird auch silbern mein Haar*, 43–46.

law” to honor their parents (*Cyr* 8.7.10). Aulus Gellius (second century AD) somewhat nostalgically recalls that

Among the earliest Romans, as a rule, neither birth nor wealth was more highly honoured than age, but older men were revered by their juniors almost like gods and like their own parents, and everywhere and in every kind of honour they were regarded as first and of prior right. From a dinner-party, too, older men were escorted home by younger men, as we read in the records of the past, a custom which, as tradition has it, the Romans took over from the Lacedaemonians, by whom, in accordance with the laws of Lycurgus, greater honour on all occasions was paid to greater age. (*Noct. att.* 2.15.1–2 [Rolfe, LCL])

These texts give the impression that it was old age itself that called for respect. Cicero denies this. No mere words can defend old age, he says,

Nor can wrinkles and grey hair suddenly seize upon influence; but when the preceding part of life has been nobly spent, old age gathers the fruits of influence at the last. For those very things, that seem light and trivial, are marks of honour—the morning visit, being sought after, being made way for, having people rise at one’s approach, being escorted to and from the forum, being asked for advice—civilities most scrupulously observed among us and in every other state in proportion as its morals are good. (*Sen.* 63 [Rolfe, LCL])

Despite his disclaimer, Cicero dwells, not on the quality of a life “nobly spent” that leads to honors, but on proper etiquette as demonstrating honor.

These texts show that moralists expected that old men be honored, but the manner in which honor was to be shown is not particularly useful in helping us to construct the social context for 1 Tim 5:17–20. Plutarch, roughly contemporaneous with the Pastorals, is more reflective and potentially useful to us in his tractate *Whether an Old Man Should Engage in Public Affairs*.

Plutarch argues assiduously that old men should not succumb to the idleness, cowardice, and softness that characterizes the inactive life.⁸³ He goes to great lengths to shame old men into public life (784A–786A; 788B). What he demands of old men is not

deeds of hands and feet, but counsel, foresight, and speech...which contains good sense, prudent thought, and conservatism (ἀσφάλειαν);

⁸³ Plutarch, *An seni* 784A. He inveighs against the “domesticity” of such a life; cf. 792B.

and in these the hoary hair and the wrinkles that people make fun of appear as witnesses to a man's experience and strengthen him by aid of persuasiveness and the reputation for character. For youth is meant to obey and old age to rule... (*An seni* 789D–E [Fowler, LCL])

An old man who is active in speaking and doing (λέγων τι καὶ πράττων) and being honoured (τιμώμενος) is a sight to be revered (σεμνὸν... θαῦμα) (788A; cf. 791B; 793B); “no one who takes part in public life is without hope of attaining the reverence (αἰδώς) and repute (δόξα) to which old age leads” (787D). There is a “prerogative due to seniority in age (πρεσβεΐαν),” admitted to by all, and the honor paid to old age adorns the person who pays the honor more than anything else does (787D).

The old man in public service draws benefits in other ways. The pleasures he derives from doing good and noble works for the community and humanity “bear the soul on high as it acquires greatness and lofty spirit mingled with joy” (786BCD).⁸⁴ Such acts result in gratitude, praise, and goodwill, which add to his joy in virtue. He preserves his reputation and maintains his friendship with the people “by his mere readiness to serve and by not failing or growing weary in care and concern (τῆς ἐπιμελείας καὶ φροντίδος) for the people” (786F–87B).

Like Plutarch's old man, the old men in 1 Tim 5:17–18 serve their communities by their speaking, Plutarch of course having the larger civic community in mind, the NT text the church. According to 5:1, an old man was not to be treated roughly, but deference was to be shown him appropriate to his age. In v. 17, on the other hand, it is the functions he performs that render him worthy of double honor. As in Plutarch, the concern is for the care of the community, but response to such care is more than a matter of being nice to the old fellows; they are to be doubly honored by being bestowed an honorarium, a command that is supported by an appeal to Scripture (v. 18), which is represented by two citations. The author does not quote directly from the OT, but derives his texts from Christian traditions which dealt with the subject in which he is interested.

Scripture Says: The Ox and the Workman

The first citation is of Deut 25:4, “Do not muzzle an ox while it is threshing,” which is used in a slightly different form in 1 Cor 9:9, which

⁸⁴ The allusion is to Plato, *Phaedr.* 246B–248E.

in turn is unlike any OT text.⁸⁵ The passage originally dealt with the proper care of animals;⁸⁶ Paul uses the threshing ox as one of a series of self evident examples (the soldier, vinedresser, shepherd [v. 10b], ox [vv. 9–10a], farmer [v. 10b], temple functionaries [v. 13]) of the principle that underlies his claim to financial support. These examples are offered in the form of rhetorical questions, whose force is strengthened by finding further support in the Law of Moses (vv. 8–10; cf. 10:10), which he claims was written for the sake of Christians.⁸⁷

Yet, for all the importance attached to the fact that it is Scripture, the ox statement is at heart proverbial in character. A proverb was considered “the wisdom of a people, the wisdom of the world” (Demetrius, *Eloc.* 232). As to its content, it is on a par with the other examples Paul lists.

Paul discovers further support of his argument in a command of the Lord that those who preach the gospel should receive their livelihood from the gospel (v. 14). This saying of the Lord has its closest parallel in Luke 10:7 (par. Matt 10:10), which deals polemically with the support of preachers.⁸⁸ That Paul gives only the content and not the wording of the Jesus word probably assumes that the wording was familiar to his readers.⁸⁹ In fact, the saying was so proverbial as to be unremarkable in itself; it is the attribution to the Lord that draws attention.⁹⁰ It is noteworthy that a Greek proverb, with minor changes, is also attributed

⁸⁵ The differences, however, are slight, involving slight difference in word order and a variant (κημόσεις for φιμώσεις) of some interest but not importance. See Bruce M. Metzger, *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament*. (2nd ed.; New York: American Bible Society, 1994), 492. Hübner, *Vetus Testamentum in Novo*, 259, considers the possibility that 1 Cor 9:9 is not a citation of Deut 25:4, but an interpretation of it.

⁸⁶ See Eduard Lohse, “‘Kümmert sich Gott etwa um die Ochsen?’ Zu 1 Kor 9,9,” *ZNW* 88 (1997): 2–3; Erich Grässer, “Nochmal: ‘Kümmert sich Gott um die Ochsen?’,” *ZNW* 97 (2006): 275–79.

⁸⁷ On Paul’s hermeneutical use of the text, see D. Instone Brewer, “1 Corinthians 9.9–11: A Literal Interpretation of ‘Do Not Muzzle the Ox,’” *NTS* 38 (1992): 554–65.

⁸⁸ Debate about such support is reflected in the tradition: Luke 10:7 declares the worker worthy of his wage (μισθός), which is also what is in Paul’s mind (see 1 Cor 9:17–18). Matthew changed that to τροφή (cf. *Did.* 13.1), permitting the worker to receive food, but not pay. See Ulrich Luz, *Das Evangelium nach Matthäus* (EKKNT 1/2; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Benziger/Neukirchen, 1990), 2:94–95.

⁸⁹ So Johannes Weiss, *Der erste Korintherbrief* (KEK; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1910), 239.

⁹⁰ See A. E. Harvey, “‘The Workman is Worthy of His Hire’: Fortunes of a Proverb in the Early Church,” *NovT* 24 (1982): 209–21, for references.

to Jesus in Acts 20:35, which likewise deals with financial matters, and is cited just after Paul is said to deny that he was avaricious.⁹¹

First Timothy 5:18 is dependent on 1 Corinthians 9, but strips it down to the two proverbial citations, which represent a commonsensical workaday ethic. A problem is created by καί (“and”), which connects the two citations, thus including as Scripture also what in the Gospel tradition and 1 Corinthians 9 is a saying of Jesus: “The workman is worthy of his pay.” The question this raises about the author’s understanding of Scripture need not detain us; what is more important to him is the principle embodied in the ox citation, which is explained by the proverb about the workman.

The author is writing with traditions known to his readers, and he can therefore be succinct, which is his style. He is furthermore dealing with a subject that was treated polemically in the Gospel tradition and 1 Corinthians 9, and is himself addressing a contentious situation (vv. 19–20). Intramural circumstances move him to reach beyond the general moral traditions about old men that he has been using to Christian tradition that his readers would recognize and consider applicable to themselves.

The Evidence of Two or Three Witnesses

The second directive (v. 19) is not connected syntactically to v. 18, and may therefore also be independent of it so far as content is concerned. However, that the author is still interested in the treatment of a πρεσβύτερος suggests that v. 19 is a continuation of vv. 17–18. But the tone becomes much sharper. Instead of a third person plural imperative (ἄξιουσθωσαν [“let...be regarded as worthy”], v. 17), which calls for congregational responsibility in an impersonal manner, a prohibition (μὴ παραδέχου [“Do not accept”], v. 19) and a command (ἐλέγχε [“Reprove”], v. 20) in the second person singular demand action from Timothy.⁹² The mood also changes from special honor paid for service to

⁹¹ See Ernst Haenchen, *The Acts of the Apostles* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1971), 594 n. 5, with examples.

⁹² Παραδέχεσθαι may signify no more than that he acted as a church leader (Collins, *I & II Timothy and Titus*, 146; Roloff, *Der erste Brief an Timotheus*, 310–11). There is no justification for the view that as an apostolic delegate he “acts with the authority of the apostle” (Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 367).

proper judicial procedure when a charge is brought against an old man.⁹³ Although v. 19 could apply to any accusation against any member of the community, in this context it likely refers to an old man who performs the services mentioned in v. 17. Financial (im)propriety may also be in view, but certainty on these matters is not easily achievable.⁹⁴

The proper occasion to bring a charge is “on the testimony of two or three witnesses,” a combination of Deut 17:6 and 19:15 LXX, which is not identified as Scripture, and therefore presumed to be known. The principle of multiple witnesses was widely observed in Judaism, but Deut 19:15 and its parallels were not cited in support of it.⁹⁵ It is cited by Paul in 2 Cor 13:1 and in the judicial procedure outlined in Matt 18:16, and it is from this early Christian tradition that the citation in 1 Timothy 5 is derived.⁹⁶

Rebuking the Sinners

A final comment is in order regarding v. 20, which is sometimes taken to be the conclusion of a unit of text (vv. 17–20).

Timothy is to rebuke (ἐλεγχε, “reprove”) publicly those who sin (τοὺς ἁμαρτάνοντας, v. 20). Most commentators identify these sinners as elders who had been convicted in a proper judicial process, and stress the continuing action expressed by the present participle, indicating that the disciplinary action taken against them did not have the desired effect.⁹⁷ But that is not at all obvious. There is no syntactical connection to link v. 20 with the judicial procedure of v. 19. And there is no

⁹³ I know of no compelling reason why πρεσβύτερος in v. 19 should be understood differently from vv. 1 and 17. So also LaFosse, “An Anthropological View of Old Age in Early Christian Communities,” 8.

⁹⁴ In support of this surmise is the fact that vv. 3–18 deal with financial matters. It is also noteworthy that the author requires elders/bishops not be lovers of money (1 Tim 3:3) or greedy for gain (Titus 1:7), and that they vigorously oppose the heretics, who teach for the sake of gain (Titus 1:9–11).

⁹⁵ E.g., *Sanh.* 5; Josephus, *Vita* 256–257; *Ant.* 4.219. See H. van Vliet, *No Single Testimony: A Study on the Adoption of the Law of Deut. 19:15 par into the New Testament* (Utrecht: Kemink en Zoon, 1958); and the supplement, *idem.*, *Did Greek-Roman-Hellenistic Law Know the Exclusion of the Single Witness?* (Franeker: Wever, 1980).

⁹⁶ See the lucid treatment of the issue by Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 367–70.

⁹⁷ E.g., Roloff, *Der erste Brief an Timotheus*, 310–11; Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 618; Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 370–71. LaFosse, “An Anthropological View of Old Age in Early Christian Communities,” 8–9, finding parallels to *1 Clem.* 3.3; 21.6, thinks the reference is to young men who brought false charges against the elderly.

syntactical connection between vv. 20, 21, 22, 23, which are a series of independent commands.

Ἐλέγχειν is indeed used in Matt 18:15 (but of rebuking in private), and the judicial procedure of Deut 19 does result in the fear of the rest (οἱ ἐπίλοιποι ἀκούσαντες φοβηθήσονται) (v. 20). It is a harsh word, and is used in the Pastoral Epistles of speech against heretics (2 Tim 4:2; Titus 1:9, 13). If my contention that πρεσβύτερος here refers to an old man has merit, a further difficulty arises. We noted above that ἔλεγχος is virtually equivalent to ἐπίπληξις, that such speech aimed at correcting sins (ἁμαρτήματα) by instilling fear (φόβος), and that it was inappropriate for youth to use such speech in addressing their elders. First Timothy 5:1 represents that convention perfectly, and v. 20 would fly in its face if those who are sinning and are to be reprovved are old men. On the other hand, the author remains consistent if he thinks that convicting speech addressed to certain members of the congregation will have a salutary effect on other members.

CONCLUSION

An awareness of ancient Greek and Latin comments on old age makes us more sensitive to the interest of the Pastoral Epistles in the relationship between different generations in the church. The basic thrust of the author's moral instruction is derived from Hellenistic moral tradition and demands that some old women and men be honored, which means that they are to receive financial assistance from the church because of their need or for their ongoing service.

The author's use of the Hellenistic traditions is quite conventional. He uses them with ease, with conviction that they are pleasing to God (1 Tim 5:4; cf. 2:3), and holds up pagan moral practice to provide incentive for Christian behavior (5:8). When he does differ from these traditions it is only in degree rather than as a different understanding of the moral life. For example, it appears that he envisages a larger role for women to take care of their widowed mothers or grandmothers than was usual in the larger society.

The traditions he uses do open windows on the social reality of his circumstance. But he does not use the traditions available to himself to construct a new, creative moral statement in the way he uses pagan and Christian traditions to construct impressive Christological formulations, as in Titus 2:11–14 and 3:3–7. It is not that he has only a superficial

knowledge of these traditions, but that he does not use them in a theologically creative manner.

The author shows even less creativity in using Scripture. He makes no independent use of the OT. He derives two of his citations from Christian tradition and uses them in a leaner form, which makes their proverbial character more prominent. The third citation is in fact not a scriptural text but is also a proverb widely used, not only by Christians. He uses the biblical material, whether identified as such or not, because of its self-evident usefulness and general applicability. There is nothing theological in what he cites; there is only the claim, correct or not, that it is "Scripture," whatever that means to him.

It is difficult to decide to what degree the texts from the Pastorals touched on in this article were addressed to actual situations. On a general level, they do appear to reflect social reality, such as the concern with relationships between the generations and how widows are to be cared for. And the polemical Christian background from which his proverbial examples of the ox and the workman come may suggest that the author is confronting controversies about payment of preachers. But it is not absolutely clear that this is the case, or whether he is giving directives which are generally applicable, including the context in which he was writing.

PROVERBS 3:11–12, HEBREWS 12:5–6,
AND THE TRADITION OF CORPORAL PUNISHMENT

John T. Fitzgerald

INTRODUCTION

In commenting on Heb 5:8, Carl R. Holladay correctly points out that the notion of “learning through suffering” (*pathei mathos*) had proverbial status in Greek antiquity,” citing Aeschylus (*Ag* 177: *πάθει μάθος*, “learning comes by suffering”) and quoting Aesop’s statement that “sufferings are teachings” (*παθήματα . . . μαθήματα*).¹ Holladay also calls attention to the crucial role that Scripture plays in Hebrews, with the author quoting the biblical text some thirty-five times.² One of these quotations occurs at Heb 12:5–6, where the author cites the book of Proverbs for the only time in his entire work.³ The quotation is from Prov 3:11–12, which he cites from the Septuagint, the version that he uses throughout his “word of exhortation” (Heb 13:22).

Proverbs 3:11–12 reflects the ancient Israelite practice of corporal punishment, which is a specific instantiation of the intimate connection in ancient thought between suffering (*παθεῖν*) and learning (*μαθεῖν*). The author of Hebrews views it as axiomatic that every father disciplines (*παιδεύει*) his children (Heb 12:7–8a), or at least his legitimate children (Heb 12:8b), and that this discipline (*παιδεία*) involves whipping (*μαστιγοῦ*) (Heb 12:6), which is an admittedly painful (*λύπη*) experience (Heb 12:11). Confident that the recipients of his exhortation accepted the putative value and benefits (*καρπὸν*) of such physically painful

¹ Carl R. Holladay, *A Critical Introduction to the New Testament: Interpreting the Message and Meaning of Jesus Christ* (Nashville: Abingdon, 2005), 450, 465 n. 24. Many of the relevant Greek materials on the connection between learning and suffering/experiencing have been collected and discussed by Heinrich Dörrie, *Leid und Erfahrung: Die Wort- und Sinn-Verbindung παθεῖν-μαθεῖν im griechischen Denken* (Abhandlungen der Geistes- und Sozialwissenschaftlichen Klasse 5; Mainz: Akademie der Wissenschaften und der Literatur, 1956). For a discussion of the “learning through suffering” theme in the Aesopica, see Christos A. Zafropoulos, *Ethics in Aesop’s Fables: The Augustan Collection* (Mnemosyne 216; Leiden: Brill, 2001), 65–69.

² Holladay, *Critical Introduction*, 465 n. 26.

³ There is also an allusion to Prov 4:26 LXX at Heb 12:13.

discipline and training (γεγυμνασμένοις) by earthly fathers (Heb 12:11), he argues that they should even more willingly accept the discipline of their heavenly Father (12:9).⁴

Needless to say, this *a minore ad maius* (“from the lesser to the greater”) argument would scarcely be possible in many churches or synagogues today. To be sure, although numerous parents in the contemporary world continue to use corporal punishment in disciplining their children, many modern parents argue—rightly in my view—that the practice is abusive and that there are better and more effective ways to discipline children when it is necessary to do so.⁵ Those who reject corporal punishment as a disciplinary method typically criticize their peers who still use it. In the ancient world, by contrast, corporal punishment was ubiquitous, and the parents who were criticized tended to be those who “spared the rod” and thus “spoiled the child.” At the same time, there were some who criticized the practice, especially when carried out by teachers in school who were acting *in loco parentis*.⁶

This essay provides a brief discussion of the use of corporal punishment in ancient homes and schools, which were the primary social settings in which this kind of discipline was administered. Given limitations of space, the focus of this essay will be on corporal punishment in the ancient Near East (including Egypt) and ancient Israel, for the latter is the tradition to which the author of Hebrews appeals when he

⁴ In commenting on 1 Cor 4:21, Holladay quite astutely observes that Paul’s reference to the “rod” reflects the practice of corporal punishment by ancient parents and that the “rod” in this passage continues the apostle’s self-presentation as the “father” of the Corinthian believers (1 Cor 4:15). In this connection he also refers to Heb 12:5–6. See his *The First Letter of Paul to the Corinthians* (Living Word Commentary; Austin: Sweet, 1979), 68–69. For the depiction of the Corinthians as immature children, see 1 Cor 3:1–2 and esp. 4:6, where Paul depicts them as children who have not yet learned how to “color within the lines.” For this interpretation, see John T. Fitzgerald, *Cracks in an Earthen Vessel: An Examination of the Catalogues of Hardships in the Corinthian Correspondence* (SBLDS 99; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1988), 122–27.

⁵ For a defense and a critique of the use of corporal punishment, see the contrasting views of John Rosemond, “Proper Socialization Requires Powerful Love and Equally Powerful Discipline,” and Murray A. Straus, “Children Should Never, Ever, Be Spanked No Matter What the Circumstances,” both in *Current Controversies on Family Violence* (ed. D. R. Loseke, R. J. Gelles, and M. M. Cavanaugh; 2nd ed.; Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Sage, 2005), 131–36 (Rosemond), 137–57 (Straus).

⁶ See, for example, Quintilian, *Inst.* 1.3.13–17. Although Libanius did occasionally use the cane, he became more and more critical of it, and in *Or.* 2.20 he boasts that he has no need of a cane because his students do everything voluntarily. On Himerius’s abhorrence of teachers who resorted to the whip to control their charges, see Raffaella Cribiore, *The School of Libanius in Late Antique Antioch* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007), 195.

cites Prov 3:11–12 LXX in Heb 12:5–6. In doing so, however, he appeals not to an antiquated idea and discarded practice, but to a living reality. Corporal punishment was just as much a part of the Greco-Roman world in which he lived as it had been part of the world of the ancient scribes and sages who transmitted to later generations this traditional idea of what good parenting entails.⁷

CORPORAL PUNISHMENT IN THE ANCIENT NEAR EAST

Corporal punishment as a disciplinary method at home and in school is attested from early times. For example, the practice of caning schoolboys in ancient Mesopotamia during the Sumerian and Old Babylonian periods⁸ is reflected in a vivid first-person account that is part of a popular scribal work that may have been composed as early as 2000 BCE and is preserved in tablets and fragments dating from the first half of the second millennium BCE.⁹ In the relevant portion of this work, often referred to as *Schooldays*,¹⁰ the schoolboy refers to being caned repeatedly by his

⁷ For corporal punishment among the Greeks and Romans, see esp. Raffaella Cribiore, *Gymnastics of the Mind: Greek Education in Hellenistic and Roman Egypt* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001), 65–73, and Christian Laes, *Kinderen bij de Romeinen: Zes eeuwen dagelijks leven* (Leuven: Davidfonds, 2006), 123–31.

⁸ On Sumerian schools, see Samuel Noah Kramer, *The Sumerians: Their History, Culture, and Character* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1963), 229–48. The Old Babylonian period (19th–17th centuries BCE), which was the heyday of the scribal academy, was a transition period in which Akkadian replaced Sumerian as the language of commerce and diplomacy but Sumerian still reigned supreme in the schools.

⁹ Samuel Noah Kramer, “Schooldays: A Sumerian Composition Relating to the Education of a Scribe,” *JAOs* 69 (1949): 199–215, esp. 199–200. This text, written in Sumerian but probably deriving from the Old Babylonian period, is preserved in twenty-one tablets and fragments from the Late Babylonian period, with the great number of fragments attesting the popularity of the work. All translations of this work are those of Kramer, though I have occasionally modified his punctuation. A slightly different translation and a non-technical discussion of this work also appear in Kramer, *Sumerians*, 237–40.

¹⁰ Owing to the title of Kramer’s article (see n. 9 above), the text itself is commonly referred to as *Schooldays*; see Laurie E. Pearce, “The Scribes and Scholars of Ancient Mesopotamia,” *CANE* 4:2265–78, esp. 2271. On the first twenty-six lines of this text, see also Adam Falkenstein, “Der ‘Sohn des Tafelhauses,’” *WO* 1 (1948): 172–86. For other ancient Mesopotamian school or “*é-dub-ba*” (“tablet-house”) compositions, see Edmund I. Gordon, “A New Look at the Wisdom of Sumer and Akkad,” *BO* 17 (1960): 122–52, esp. 142–44, 151–52; H. W. F. Saggs, *The Greatness that Was Babylon: A Sketch of the Ancient Civilization of the Tigris-Euphrates Valley* (New York: Hawthorn, 1962), 434–38; and J. P. J. Olivier, “Schools and Wisdom Literature,” *JNSL* 4 (1975): 49–60, esp. 52. On the role and character of the Sumerian schools, see J. J. A. van Dijk, *La sagesse suméro-accadienne: Recherches sur les genres littéraires des textes sapientiaux* (Commentationes orientales 1; Leiden:

“school-father” and others at the school. Because even arriving late to school could result in a caning, the boy tells his biological father before going to bed the night before school, “Wake me early in the morning. I must not be late, (or) my teacher will cane me.”¹¹ Once at school the next day, however, he did not escape unscathed; indeed, the poor lad is caned no less than *nine times* for various infractions—including poor handwriting—three times by the teacher himself and six times by the teacher’s “rather sadistic assistants.”¹²

My “school-father” *read* my tablet to me,
 (said) “The . . . *is cut off*,” caned me. . . .
 The teacher in supervising the school duties,
 looked into *house and street in order to pounce upon* someone, (said)
 “Your . . . *is not . . .*,” caned me. . . .
 Who¹³ was in charge of . . . (said) “Why when I was not here did you talk?”
 caned me.
 Who was in charge of the . . . (said), “Why when I was not here did you not
 keep your head high?” caned me.
 Who was in charge of *drawing* (said) “Why when I was not here did you
 stand up?” caned me.
 Who was in charge of the gate (said) “Why when I was not here did you
go out?” caned me.
 Who was in charge of the . . . (said) “Why when I was not here did you take
 the . . . ?” caned me.
 Who was in charge of the Sumerian (said) “You spoke . . .,” caned me.
 My teacher (said) “Your hand is not good,” caned me.¹⁴

Brill, 1953), 21–27, and C. J. Gadd, *Teachers and Students in the Oldest Schools* (London: School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, 1956).

¹¹ The “teacher” here is the *um-mi-a* or “headmaster.” Both Falkenstein, “Sohn des Tafelhauses,” 181, and Kramer, *Sumerians*, 232, equate the “headmaster” and the “school-father” (*adda é-dubba*), whereas Saggs, *Greatness*, 435, views the latter as the “form-master” and second in rank to the “headmaster.” Gadd, *Teachers and Students*, 17, also treats them as two different figures but concedes that “it might seem that both of these figures were one.” In what follows I shall treat the two terms as alternative designations for the head of the school, doing so because in line 52 the *um-mi-a* is invited to the schoolboy’s home and subsequently referred to in line 58 as the *adda é-dubba*.

¹² Kramer, “Schooldays,” 199.

¹³ In the following portion of this passage, “the pupil lists seven canings which he received from the hands of seven members of the school’s teaching and administrative personnel. The first, second, and fifth canings were administered by school officials, whose duties are uncertain—the relevant text is either broken or obscure—for speaking, slouching (?), and taking something while they were not around. The fourth and fifth were administered by the drawing (?) instructor and the gatekeeper for standing up and walking out in their absence. The instructor in charge of Sumerian gave him his sixth caning for some wrong he committed in connection with Sumerian. And to top it all, the teacher, who was no doubt also headmaster of the school, canes him for his poor handwriting” (Kramer, “Schooldays,” 211).

¹⁴ Kramer, “Schooldays,” 205.

As this text suggests, “Discipline seems to have been a major problem in the Sumerian school,” and “while the teachers no doubt encouraged their students to do good work by means of praise and commendation,” there is absolutely no doubt that “they depended primarily on the cane for correcting the student’s faults and inadequacies.”¹⁵

Corporal punishment was freely administered, for poor exercises, lack of diligence, improper dress, undignified behaviour outside school hours, or apparently from sheer spleen on the part of any member of the school staff from the janitor upwards.¹⁶

Indeed, one of the school functionaries is referred to as “the man of the whip.”¹⁷ Although the whip and the cane were undeniably prominent, teachers and their staff did not depend exclusively on these instruments. Another Sumerian text, *The Disputation between Enkimansi and Girnishag*, which consists largely of a verbal dispute between two students who hurl insults and call each other names, shows that a student might be cudged or even put in fetters and confined if he were deemed insubordinate. In this particular text, Girnishag is not only an advanced student but also one of the headmasters’s “teaching assistants.” Disgusted by Enkimansi’s lack of respect for Girnishag, the headmaster tells a member of the school staff, “Do to him what you please.” With Enkimansi’s fate now in his hands, this staff member turns to Enkimansi and says,

If I (really) did to you what I pleased... I would (first) beat you with a mace—what’s a wooden board (when it comes to beating!)—and having put copper chains on your feet, would lock you up in the house (and) for two months would not let you out of the school (building).¹⁸

Corporal punishment did not die out with the Sumerians but continued to be practiced in the ancient Near East in subsequent periods. *The Words of Ahiqar*, for example, present the sayings of Ahiqar (Ahikar), who is depicted as a sage counselor at the court of the neo-Assyrian kings Sennacherib (705–681 BCE) and Esarhaddon (681–669 BCE). Some scholars believe that the original language of the sayings was Akkadian

¹⁵ Kramer, *Sumerians*, 235–36; see also 266, where he notes appeals by teachers to students’ competitive drive and desire for preeminence.

¹⁶ Saggs, *Greatness*, 188.

¹⁷ Gadd, *Teachers and Students*, 22.

¹⁸ The translation is that of Kramer in *Sumerians*, 242–43. For other discussions and partial translations of this fragmentary text, see Gadd, *Teachers and Students*, 16, 29–36, and Saggs, *Greatness*, 436–38.

and thus reflect Assyrian practice,¹⁹ whereas others hold that they were composed in Aramaic and originated in north Syria.²⁰ In the use of corporal punishment, however, no differences existed between these two geographical areas, and Ahiqar's endorsement of corporal punishment reflects the cultural norm:

Spare not your son from the rod;
otherwise, can you save him [from *wickedness*]?
If I beat you, my son,
you will not die;
but if I leave you alone,
[you will not live].²¹

The Syriac and Armenian versions of these sayings elaborate the basic thought. The second Syriac recension (#22) offers the following instruction:

My son, withhold not thy son from stripes; for the beating of a boy is like manure to the garden, and like rope to an ass (or any other beast) and like tether on the foot of an ass.

The first recension of the Armenian version, which appears to be based on a very old Syriac version that is no longer extant,²² reads as follows:

Son, *spare not the rod to thy son*, for the rod is to children as the dung in the garden; and as the tie and seal fastening the packet, and as the tether on the foot of the ass, so is the rod profitable to the child. For *if thou strike him* with a rod once or twice, he is rendered sensible quietly, *he does not die*. *But if thou leave him to his own will*, he becomes a thief; and they will take him to the gallows and to death, and he becomes unto thee a reproach and breaking of heart.²³

¹⁹ See, for example, Pierre Grelot, *Documents araméens d'Égypte* (LAPO 5; Paris: Cerf, 1972), 427–52, esp. 452.

²⁰ See esp. James M. Lindenberger, *The Aramaic Proverbs of Ahiqar* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1983), 16–17, 20, and “Ahiqar: A New Translation and Introduction,” *OTP* 2:479–507, esp. 481–82.

²¹ *Words of Ahiqar*, Sayings 3–4 (col. VI, 81–82). See also Saying 2: “The son who is instructed and restrained, and on whose foot the bar [= fetter, hobble] is placed, [will prosper in life].” The translations of the *Words of Ahiqar* are those of Lindenberger, “Ahiqar,” 2:498.

²² Lindenberger, *Aramaic Proverbs*, 5, 7.

²³ The translations of the Syriac and Armenian versions are those given by Lindenberger, *Aramaic Proverbs*, 49. For the various recensions and versions of Ahiqar, see F. C. Conybeare, J. Rendel Harris, and Agnes Smith Lewis, eds., *The Story of Ahiqar from the Aramaic, Syriac, Arabic, Armenian, Ethiopic, Old Turkish, Greek and Slavonic Versions* (2nd ed.; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1913).

The same perspective on corporal punishment for children and its practice is found in ancient Egypt, and references to it in Egyptian literature continue into the time of the Roman Empire.²⁴ As was the case elsewhere in the ancient world, “beating with a stick was a common practice” in Egyptian schools, with the education of children routinely compared to the domestication of animals²⁵ and “the threat of flogging” recurring “repeatedly in Egyptian school writings.”²⁶ For example, Papyrus Anastasi III, which is dated to the third regnal year of Merneptah (ca. 1213–1204 BCE),²⁷ contains the following warning to a pupil: “Spend no days of idleness or you shall be beaten.” That threat is followed immediately by the explanation: “A boy’s ear is upon

²⁴ For example, a Demotic writing exercise dealing with the childhood of the hero Si-Osire was written on a jug that is today preserved in Strassburg. Dating from the first or second century CE, it says that Si-Osire’s mother went to see his schoolteacher to find out if her son was foolish and presumably being punished. Following a gap in the text, the narrative continues with a reference to “the beating of my limbs by the blows of a whip” (trans. by R. K. Ritner in *The Literature of Ancient Egypt* [ed. W. K. Simpson; 3rd ed.; New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003], 491). Unfortunately, the text is too fragmentary to interpret the key line with confidence. Si-Osire is best known to NT scholars from the “tour of hell” that appears in *The Adventures of Setna and Si-Osire* (often called *Setna II*), with its account of the reversal of fortunes of a rich and poor man in the netherworld. The latter was the subject of Hugo Gressman’s well-known *Vom reichen Mann und armen Lazarus* (Abhandlungen der Königlich preussischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, Philosophische-historische Klasse 7; Berlin: G. Reimer, 1918), who argued that it formed the basis for Jesus’ parable in Luke 16:19–31 and for similar stories found in the Talmud and medieval Jewish sources.

²⁵ See, for example, P.Bologna 1094, No. 6; P.Anastasi III, 4.1–2; P.Sallier I, 8.1; P.Lansing 2.6–7; 3.5–10; *Instruction of Anü* 9.17–10.7. In what follows, all references to and translations of Egyptian New Kingdom hieratic texts (P.Bologna 1094; P.Anastasi III, IV, and V; P.Sallier I; P.Lansing; P.Koller; P.Turin A, C, D) are those of Ricardo A. Caminos, *Late-Egyptian Miscellanies* (London: Oxford University Press, 1954), with exceptions specifically noted. For an English translation of the *Instruction of Anü* (*Any*), see Miriam Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian Literature* (3 vols.; Berkeley: University of California Press, 1973–80), 2:135–46.

²⁶ Nili Shupak, “The ‘Sitz im Leben’ of the Book of Proverbs in the Light of a Comparison of Biblical and Egyptian Wisdom Literature,” *RB* 94 (1987): 98–119, esp. 107–10. See also Shupak’s *Where Can Wisdom Be Found? The Sage’s Language in the Bible and in Ancient Egyptian Literature* (OBO 130; Fribourg: University of Fribourg Press; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1993), 31–34, 49–51. For older discussions of the role of beatings and other disciplinary methods in Egyptian education, see esp. Wilhelm Spiegelberg, *Studien und Materialien zum Rechtswesen des Pharaonenreiches der Dynast. XVIII–XXI (c. 1500–1000 v. Chr.)* (Hannover: Hahn, 1892), 68–69; Adolf Erman and Hermann Ranke, *Aegypten und ägyptisches Leben im Altertum* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1923), 376–77; A. P. F. Volten, *Studien zum Weisheitsbuch des Anü* (Kgl. Danske Videnskabernes Selskab., Historik-filologiske Meddelelser 23.3; Copenhagen: Levin & Munksgaard, Ejnar Munksgaard, 1937), 176; and Hellmut Brunner, *Allägyptische Erziehung* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1957), 56–65, esp. 56–57.

²⁷ James P. Allen, “Praise of Pi-Ramessu (3.3) (Papyrus Anastasi III),” in *The Context of Scripture* (ed. W. W. Hallo; 3 vols.; Leiden: Brill, 2003), 3:15.

his back, he hearkens to his beater" (3.12–13).²⁸ That same idea appears in Papyrus Lansing, a schoolbook from the 20th Dynasty of the New Kingdom:²⁹ "You beat my back; your teaching entered my ear."³⁰ Most parents fully supported the use of corporal punishment in the schools. One father tells his son, "I have placed you at the school along with the children of magistrates," and exhorts him, "Be not weary, spend no day of idleness, or woe to your limbs!" (P.Anastasi V, 22.8 and 23.5).

In dealing with particularly recalcitrant students or those who were not striving to meet scribal standards, Egyptian scribes (like their Mesopotamian counterparts) sometimes resorted to the use of stocks to punish and secure students. Alternatively, stocks could be combined with a thrashing, as in the warning given to a student who is "whirling around in pleasures" and neglecting the teacher's instructions: "I shall cause your feet to desist from walking in the streets, you being beaten with hippopotamus thongs" (P.Anastasi V, 17.5). Sometimes this more severe method produced the desired results. The same scribe who warned his pleasure-seeking student about the stocks had suffered that same fate when he himself was a student, and the stocks had been an effective didactic device for him. Thus he tells his student:

When I was of your age I spent my life in the stocks; it was they that tamed my limbs. They stayed three months with me. I was imprisoned in the temple whilst my father and mother were in the field as well as (my) brothers and sisters. They left me (only) after my hand was deft and I had surpassed whoever was <in> front <of me>, I being the first among all my companions, having surpassed them in books. (P.Anastasi V, 18.1–4)

Yet even this method, like the rod, did not always work. In one case a frustrated scribe of the New Kingdom period rebukes a dissipated student, saying, "You have been found scrambling over a wall, after you broke the stocks" (P.Anastasi IV, 11.11–12). In another instance, a

²⁸ The translation is that of Shupak, "Sitz im Leben," 110; cf. 114 for a slightly different rendering. The same advice is found in P.Anastasi V, 8.5–6.

²⁹ Adolf Erman and H. O. Lange, eds., *Papyrus Lansing: Eine ägyptische Schulhandschrift der 20. Dynastie* (Kgl. Danske Videnskabernes Selskab., Historisk-filologiske Meddelelser 10.3; Copenhagen: Høst, 1925).

³⁰ PLansing 11.1–2; the translation is that of Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian Literature*, 2:172 (in her division of the text, it is PLansing 9). See also P.Anastasi IV, 8.7–8: "<I> was brought up as a boy beside you, you smote my back, and your teaching entered into my ear."

young scribe who is thirty years old escapes from the stocks by burning them: "If your feet are put in the stocks, you set fire to them at night that you may scramble over a high wall in the place in which you are" (P.Turin A, 1.6–7).

At the same time, many scribes recognized that corporal punishment did not always produce the desired results.³¹ Both the challenge of dealing with a "problem" student and the determination to do so effectively is revealed in the following words:

I shall give you 100 blows, and you will disregard them all. You are with me as a beaten ass that recovers in a day.... A kite can be placed in a nest, and a falcon can be caught by the wings. I will (yet) make a man of you, you naughty lad! (P.Sallier I, 7.11–8.2)³²

Frustrated with a particularly stubborn student, another scribe chides the lad, "Young fellow, how conceited you are! You do not listen when I speak!" He notes that cows and horses "do their utmost to avoid a beating," but laments to the student that "though I beat you with every kind of stick, you do not listen." Nevertheless, he will persist in using corporal punishment, explaining, "If I knew another way of doing it [that is, of getting you to listen and follow my instructions], I would do it for you, that you might listen."³³

Other scribes, however, combined their rebukes and punishments with reminders and words of exhortation: "You are in the place for perfecting yourself. Do not make your heart puerile.... Pleasant is a scribe who knows his office: his god loves him" (P.Turin A, 1.10–2.1). To encourage students to persevere, teachers set before them the even harder lots of other occupations, especially that of the soldier (who was

³¹ See, for example, P.Anastasi IV, 2.6 and P.Koller 2.4: "You are like an ass in taking castigation." See also Shupak, *Where Can Wisdom Be Found?*, 73: "Both Hebrew and Egyptian teachers apparently came to recognize that teaching by coercion and by application of authority was not always effective."

³² On "100 blows" as a common punishment in ancient Egypt, see Spiegelberg, *Studien*, 69, and Caminos, *Late-Egyptian Miscellanies*, 99.

³³ P.Lansing 2.3–9; the translation is that of Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian Literature*, 2:169 (in her division of the text it is P.Lansing 3). A slightly different translation is given by Caminos, *Late-Egyptian Miscellanies*, 377. The bracketed explanation is my own. For rebukes of disobedient, idle, and dissipated scribes, some of whom have abandoned the rigors of scribal training and turned to a pursuit of pleasure (often specified in terms of dancing, drinking, and whoring), see P.Bologna 1094, No. 6; P.Anastasi III, 3.9–4.4; IV, 2.4–3.2; 11.8–12.5; V, 8.1–9.1; 17.3–18.5; P.Sallier I, 5.4–11; 9.9–11; P.Lansing 8.3–7; P.Koller 2.2–3.3; P.Turin D, 2.6–10.

“beaten like papyrus”),³⁴ and they reminded them that to abandon the scribal profession was to turn their backs on the words of god.³⁵

Looking back on the severe training that they had received, some students were grateful to their teachers, despite the suffering that they had experienced (cf. Heb 12:11). As a gift for the very teacher who had beaten him on the back when he was a boy, one former student even declared his intention to build a villa, complete with trees, animals, gardens, and other features appropriate to a palatial estate (P.Anastasi IV, 8.7–9.4; P.Lansing 10.10–11.7). Another former student, who lived during the Ramesside period of the New Kingdom, acknowledged his debt to his former teacher by saying, “I am the ship, you are the rudder,” and compared himself to a “donkey” in the teacher’s “herd.” In retrospect, he could even call the beatings that he received “pleasant”:

I have considered (your) instruction in the time when I was with you,
when you hit (me) on my back.

For more pleasant is a beating in the school
than a well-furnished house when it is finished,
than to smell lotus in summer time,
than oil in the grave.³⁶

CORPORAL PUNISHMENT IN ANCIENT ISRAEL AND EARLY JUDAISM

The ancient Israelites did not differ at all from their ancient Near Eastern neighbors in either their basic perspectives on or their use of corporal punishment as a necessary and effective disciplinary method.

³⁴ For the hardships of other professions, see P.Anastasi III, 5.5–6.2; 6.2–10; IV, 9.4–10.1; V, 15.6–17.3; P.Sallier I, 3.5–11; 5.11–6.9; P.Lansing 4.2–5.7; 5.7–7.6; 7.6–8.7; 8.7–10.10; P.Turin C, 1.1–2.2. For the idea that the soldier is pounded like a papyrus, see P.Anastasi III, 5.8; IV, 9.7.

³⁵ See P.Anastasi V, 6.1–2; P.Sallier I, 6.1–2. The god is Thoth, the patron deity of scribes (P.Anastasi V, 9.2–10.2).

³⁶ The text, which is fourteen lines in length, is transliterated, translated, and discussed by Hans-Werner Fischer-Elfert, “Ich bin das Schiff—Du bist das Rudder: Eine Danksagung an den Lehrer,” *Studien zur altägyptischen Kultur* 11 (1984): 335–45. The ship/rudder analogy occurs in line 3, and the “donkey” or “ass” in the teacher’s “herd” metaphor occurs in line 2. The student’s reflection on the value of the corporal punishment that he received is given in lines 9–14, for it is what “drove” him into the instructor’s “teaching” (line 8). I have rendered Fischer-Elfert’s German translation (p. 337) into English, with one change. In his translation he describes the house in line 12 as “useful” (nützlich), but indicates his uncertainty by placing a question mark after this word. In translating “well-furnished” I have used another of his suggestions (p. 340), namely “wohlausgestattetes.”

Consequently, the practice of whipping one's children for disciplinary purposes was widely practiced among the ancient Israelites and Second Temple Jews, and the method was explicitly endorsed by its wisdom traditions. The following catena of quotations will make the sapiential tradition's enthusiasm for corporal punishment abundantly clear:

Those who spare the rod hate their children,
 but those who love them are diligent to discipline them. (Prov 13:24)³⁷
 Discipline your children while there is hope;
 do not set your heart on their destruction. (Prov 19:18)
 Strike a scoffer, and the simple will learn prudence;
 reprove the intelligent, and they will gain knowledge. (Prov 19:25)
 Blows that wound cleanse away evil;
 beatings make clean the innermost parts. (Prov 20:30)
 Folly is bound up in the heart of a boy,³⁸
 but the rod of discipline drives it far away. (Prov 22:15)

³⁷ Unless otherwise indicated, all translations of the Hebrew Bible and Sirach are those of the NRSV.

³⁸ Determining the general age limits for those subjected to corporal punishment in ancient Israel is difficult, in part because some of the key terms are too elastic to permit specification. For example, the NRSV translates the Hebrew noun נער with "boy" in Prov 22:15 and with "child" in Prov 29:15. Both translations are misleading in that they suggest that the rod is being only used with reference to a youngster. But the term נער was quite elastic, being applied, for example, to a newborn (1 Sam 4:21) as well as to a teenager who was seventeen years old (Gen 37:2) and to a grown man who was thirty years old (Gen 41:12, 46). And Ziba, the נער of Saul, is said to have fifteen sons (2 Sam 9:9–10), so he himself was not a young boy when this term was applied to him. For this and other reasons, some scholars argue that the נער was, to be sure, a young male (relatively speaking) but that the emphasis fell not on his age, but on his high birth and social status as a "squire." On this point, see esp. John McDonald, "The Status and Role of the Na'ar in Israelite Society," *JNES* 35 (1976): 147–70; and Ted Hildebrandt, "Proverbs 22:6a: Train Up a Child?" *Grace Theological Journal* 9 (1988): 3–19, esp. 10–14. See also W. Gunther Plaut, *Book of Proverbs: A Commentary* (Jewish Commentary for Bible Readers; New York: Union of American Hebrew Congregations, 1961), 228, who, in commenting on Prov 22:3, argues that the Talmud applied the biblical נער to "young people between the ages of 16 and 24." In any event, there is, to my knowledge, no evidence to suggest that an infant was subjected to corporal punishment, much less a man with fifteen children of his own. In all likelihood, children began to be whipped when they were toddlers (that is, after infancy, when they were believed to be old enough to respond to instructions), and they continued to be disciplined in this fashion through adolescence or as long as they resided in their parents' abode. In the schools, corporal punishment was used at all educational levels. According to Photius, *Bibliotheca* 223 (217a), Diodore of Tarsus said that "man is more likely to be beaten as a child, and when age makes him an adult he is not subjected to the whip at all" (trans. by N. G. Wilson, *Photius: The Bibliotheca* [London: Duckworth, 1994], 208). Finally, it should be noted that a similar elasticity is found with both Greek and Latin terms for youth; the word νεός, for example, was applied to people who were twenty to fifty years of age, and *iuuenis* "could designate people as young as sixteen and as old as fifty" (Marc Kleijwegt, *Ancient Youth: The Ambiguity of Youth and the Absence of Adolescence in Greco-Roman Society* [Amsterdam: Gieben, 1991], 55–56).

A whip for the horse, a bridle for the donkey,
 and a rod for the back of fools. (Prov 26:3)
 The rod and reproof give wisdom,
 but a mother is disgraced by a neglected child. (Prov 29:15)
 Discipline your children, and they will give you rest;
 they will give delight to your heart. (Prov 29:17)
 Like music in time of mourning is ill-timed conversation,
 but a thrashing and discipline are at all times wisdom. (Sir 22:6)
 He who loves his son will whip him often,
 so that he may rejoice at the way he turns out. (Sir 30:1)
 An unbroken horse turns out stubborn,
 and an unchecked son turns out headstrong. (Sir 30:8)
 Bow down his neck in his youth,
 and beat his sides while he is young;³⁹
 or else he will become stubborn and disobey you,
 and you will have sorrow of soul from him. (Sir 30:12)
 Discipline your son and make his yoke heavy,
 so that you may not be offended by his shamelessness. (Sir 30:13)⁴⁰

As this catena indicates, the same basic perspectives on “wise parenting” were operative in ancient Israel as elsewhere in the ancient Near East. To use corporal punishment in rearing children, administering it at both home and school, was viewed internationally as sagacious and had the global blessing of the vast majority of the intellectual elite. Not only do we find the same analogy with the domestication of animals⁴¹ in the various wisdom traditions, but occasionally even the same thought and basic wording. Thus, for example, Prov 23:13–14 recalls strongly the *Words of Ahiqar* quoted above, with the major difference being that Proverbs addresses the words to the parents and Ahiqar speaks first to the parents, then directly to the son:

Do not withhold discipline from your children;
 if you beat them with a rod, they will not die.
 If you beat them with the rod,
 you will save their lives from Sheol. (Prov 23:13–14)

³⁹ Augustine is thinking of this passage when he mentions “that discipline whereby Holy Scripture says the sides of the beloved son should be beaten, lest he grow up unbroken” (*Civ.* 22.22). For a discussion from a social-scientific perspective, see John J. Pilch, “‘Beat His Ribs While He is Young’ (Sir 30:12): A Window on the Mediterranean World,” *BTB* 23 (1993): 101–13.

⁴⁰ See also Prov 12:1; 17:10; 1 Kgs 12:11, 14.

⁴¹ The comparison of human discipline to the training of animals is also found in the prophetic tradition; see Jer 31:18: “You flogged me, I took a flogging, like a young, untrained bull” (NJB).

Spare not your son from the rod;...
 If I beat you, my son,
 you will not die;
 but if I leave you alone,
 [you will not live]. (*Words of Ahiqar*, Sayings 3–4)⁴²

Egyptian sapiential instructions also assure parents that whipping children will not kill them but rather preserve their life. For example, Papyrus Insinger, a Demotic papyrus that dates from the first century CE,⁴³ contains this idea. Perhaps composed originally during the Ptolemaic period, the maxims in this Greco-Roman work are arranged into numbered groups, to which pertinent subject headings are affixed.⁴⁴ The tenth instruction counsels parents “not to weary of instructing your son.”⁴⁵ Pertinent portions of this instruction are as follows:

Thoth has placed the stick on earth in order to teach the fool by it...
 A son does not die from being punished by his father...
 The son who is not taught, his <...> causes astonishment.
 The heart of his father does not desire a long life (for him).⁴⁶

Needless to say, this repeated assurance that the beaten boy “will not die” suggests that the beatings were occasionally vigorous if not brutal, with far more than just one or two lashes administered.⁴⁷ Many fathers and teachers used the rod with full force, striking boys and young men numerous times and with unrestrained vigor.⁴⁸ The intensity and the cruelty of some boyhood beatings were hardly different in the Greek and especially the Roman worlds.⁴⁹ Nor is there any indication that

⁴² For the purposes of this discussion, it is not necessary to decide whether Proverbs and Ahiqar are using one another or are making use of a common tradition.

⁴³ Frantisek Lexa, *Papyrus Insinger: Les enseignements moraux d'un scribe égyptien du premier siècle après J.C.* (2 vols.; Paris: P. Geuthner, 1926).

⁴⁴ Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian Literature*, 3:184–85.

⁴⁵ P.Insigner 8.21; the translations of this work are those of Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian Literature*, 3:192.

⁴⁶ P.Insigner 9.6, 9, 12–13. Conversely, “a son who listens is a (true) follower of Horus... He will attain ripe old age and will be honored” (*The Maxims of Ptahhotep* 42 [17.10–11]; the translation is that of V. A. Tobin in Simpson, *The Literature of Ancient Egypt*, 147).

⁴⁷ For the assurance that hitting a boy just “once or twice” with the rod will not kill him, see the first recension of the Armenian version of the *Words of Ahiqar*, Sayings 3–4 (quoted above in the section on “Corporal Punishment in the Ancient Near East”).

⁴⁸ The meaning of Prov 20:30 is unclear, but many scholars believe that it means that “a severe beating has a salutary effect on the character of the victim.” See R. N. Whybray, *Proverbs* (NCB Commentary; London: Marshall Pickering, 1994), 305.

⁴⁹ Carl A. Mounteer, “God the Father and Gregory the Great: The Discovery of a

there was ever much sympathy for a whipped boy. At a much later time Augustine, recalling his own boyhood beatings, remarked that “adult people, including even my parents, who wished no evil to come upon me, used to laugh at my stripes, which were at that time a great and painful evil to me” (*Conf.* 1.9.14).⁵⁰

Within Israelite tradition, this harsh and sometimes unspeakably cruel use of corporal punishment was justified by treating it as a sign of parental love (Prov 13:24; Sir 30:1),⁵¹ and the failure to engage in this form of discipline was seen as utter folly and the mark of parental indifference, neglect, or even outright rejection. Conversely, not to beat children was to pamper and spoil them, which was viewed as disastrous for the children and dangerous as well as disgraceful for the parents (Sir 30:7–13).⁵²

Despite the various expressions of belief in the efficacy of beatings (Prov 20:30; 22:15; etc.), in certain circles there was also a recognition that the use of corporal punishment and other forms of discipline failed to correct the inappropriate behavior of some children.⁵³ The

Late Roman Childhood,” *Journal of Psychohistory* 25 (1998): 436–48, esp. 437, emphasizes the brutality of the beatings in Roman education: “The beating of children was one of the most characteristic features of Roman education. This was not just the occasional slap or swat on the buttocks. Canes, whips, dried eel’s skin, or bundles of dried reeds were used with such ferocity on children’s hands that they became so swollen the children had trouble holding their books.”

⁵⁰ The translation is that of Henry Chadwick, *Saint Augustine, Confessions* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), 11. For other texts in Augustine that refer to corporal punishment, see James J. O’Donnell, *Augustine, Confessions* (3 vols.; Oxford: Clarendon, 1992), 2:61–62. For Augustine’s use of imagery derived from corporal punishment to depict God in positive fashion as “the scourging God,” see Leo C. Ferrari, “The Boyhood Beatings of Augustine,” *Augustinian Studies* 5 (1974): 1–14.

⁵¹ James L. Crenshaw, *Old Testament Wisdom: An Introduction* (Atlanta: John Knox, 1981), 82–83: “Loving parents sought justification for such cruelty in the belief that discipline sprang from love.”

⁵² Somewhat similarly, Dionysius of Halicarnassus argues that the Greeks, in contrast to the Romans, were too lenient in punishing their children. “The punishments . . . which they ordered for disobedience in children toward their parents were not grievous: for they permitted fathers to turn their sons out of doors and to disinherit them, but nothing further. But mild punishments are not sufficient to restrain the folly of youth and its stubborn ways or to give self-control to those who have been heedless of all that is honourable; and accordingly among the Greeks many unseemly deeds are committed by children against their parents” (*Ant. rom.* 2.26.3 [Cary, LCL]).

⁵³ For an astute discussion of three different pedagogical views about students’ capacity to learn in both Proverbs and Egyptian wisdom literature, see Michael V. Fox, “Who Can Learn? A Dispute in Ancient Pedagogy,” in *Wisdom, You Are My Sister: Studies in Honor of Roland E. Murphy, O.Carm., on the Occasion of His Eightieth Birthday* (ed. M. Barré; CBSMS 29; Washington, D.C.: Catholic Biblical Association of America, 1997), 62–77.

case of the incorrigible son, for example, deals with a situation in which a stubborn and rebellious son does not heed his father and mother when they discipline him (Deut 21:18–21). That the failed discipline included corporal punishment⁵⁴ is obvious from the penalty imposed on such an incorrigible son, namely, death by stoning (Deut 21:21). In a culture where the parental use of the rod was ubiquitous, one does not omit the rod and move directly to stoning. Using stones to execute an incorrigible son means that the rod has failed, and along with that failure, the vaunted sapiential promises about the rod's powers to instill wisdom and obedience.

In spite of such failures, the rod's powers continued to be exalted, and its use was justified by the rationale that others, observing the beatings, would learn that it is utter folly to resist discipline. Furthermore, it was observed that the truly sagacious need only verbal correction to make the necessary adjustments to their behavior. As Michael V. Fox observes, this point is made emphatic in Prov 19:25:

“Smite an impudent boy...and the callow...will gain cunning. Rebuke an astute man, and he will gain knowledge” (similarly [Prov] 21:11). In other words, if you smite an impudent lad, not he but others—even the callow naïf—will get the point. But you need merely scold the wise person and he will learn better.... The practical purpose of [such] sayings that assert the ineducability of fools is to admonish the reader against the folly of resisting chastisement.⁵⁵

Similarly, one of the key functions of the numerous depictions of the foolish and the wicked in Proverbs is to show the tragic consequences of embracing immoral values and unwise views, and to exhort the recipients of the instructions to be wise and righteous. Children and students are thus to accept whatever discipline that parents and teachers administer, including corporal punishment. As Prov 12:1 puts it,

Whoever loves discipline loves knowledge,
But those who hate to be rebuked are stupid.

One of the views he identifies is that “some people cannot learn,” a sentiment echoed in later times by teachers of philosophy (see, e.g., Zeno *apud* Cicero, *Fin.* 4.56; Seneca, *Ep.* 94.31; Epictetus, *Diatr.* 1.5.2; Lucian, *Nigr.* 36; Philo, *Mut.* 211).

⁵⁴ So also Moshe Weinfeld, *Deuteronomy and the Deuteronomist School* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1972), 303 n. 4.

⁵⁵ Fox, “Who Can Learn?” 67. For a similar point, see Crenshaw, *Old Testament Wisdom*, 83. In contrast to the MT, the LXX of Prov 22:3 makes a similar point: “A clever (πανούργος) man, seeing an evil (πονηρόν) man severely punished, is himself educated (παιδεύεται), but fools pass by and suffer loss.”

Because of its successes and despite its failures, the practice of corporal punishment was so widely endorsed as “good parenting” that it could even be applied to God as discipliner of his erring children (see esp. Deut 8:5).⁵⁶ That this could involve corporal punishment is made explicit, not only in regard to the Davidic king as God’s son (2 Sam 7:14; Ps 89:32) but in other instances as well (Sir 23:2).⁵⁷ Proverbs 3:11–12 belongs to this category of divine discipline, and Prov 3:12a attributes to Yahweh the same motive of love that is elsewhere attributed to human parents (Prov 3:12b; 13:24).⁵⁸ Thus Yahweh’s discipline, like that of a good parent (Prov 3:12a),⁵⁹ should also be embraced and endured, not despised or loathed and thus evaded or rejected (Prov 3:11a).⁶⁰ Otherwise, a person risks lamenting when it is too late, “How I hated discipline (מוֹסֵר) and my heart despised reproof (תּוֹכַחַת)” (Prov 5:12). Given the quotation of Prov 3:11–12 by the author of Hebrews, these verses merit more extended discussion than can be devoted to them here. In what follows I shall focus on only two aspects that are important for Hebrews, the address to the “son” and the idea of discipline in the form of corporal punishment.

PROVERBS 3:11–12 MT AND LXX

As is well known, the Septuagint (LXX) version of Proverbs differs markedly from the proto-rabbinic recension that became the Masoretic Text

⁵⁶ For the image of God as discipliner of his people, esp. of the sinful among them, see Deut 4:36; 11:2; Job 5:17; Ps 94:12; Jer 31:18. The similarity in thought and terminology between Deut 8:5 and Prov 3:11–12 is one of many connections between wisdom literature and the Deuteronomistic corpus. On these connections, see Weinfeld, *Deuteronomy and the Deuteronomistic School*, 244–319, 362–63, esp. 303, 316, 363. On the connections between Deuteronomy and Prov 1–9, see Gerald H. Wilson, “The Words of the Wise: The Intent and Significance of Qohelet 12:9–14,” *JBL* 103 (1984): 175–92, esp. 183–89.

⁵⁷ For references to Yahweh’s whip or act of whipping, see Job 15:11 LXX; 21:9; 30:21 LXX; Ps 39:10; Jer 5:3; 6:8 LXX; Tob 11:15; 13:2, 5, 9, 14; Jdt 8:27.

⁵⁸ The link between love and discipline also appears in the NT (Rev 3:19). Gerhard von Rad, *Wisdom in Ancient Israel* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1972), 34, views Prov 3:11–12 as a new application of Prov 13:24.

⁵⁹ On the depiction of God as a parental sage in Proverbs, esp. 1–9, see Lennart Boström, *The God of the Sages: The Portrayal of God in the Book of Proverbs* (ConBOT 29; Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1990), esp. 223–24.

⁶⁰ Prov 3:11 uses two different Hebrew verbs to warn against adopting the wrong attitude toward discipline: מָאֵס, “to despise” and thus “to reject,” and קִוֵּץ, “to loathe.” On not despising discipline, see also Job 5:17; Prov 5:12; and *Pss. Sol.* 3:4; compare Prov 15:32. See also Sir 6:18, 20, 21b, 23–24.

(MT).⁶¹ The LXX not only has additional proverbs that are not present in the MT but also different versions of many of the MT's epigrams. In addition, it lacks some of the proverbs found in the MT and has a different arrangement of some of the MT's major blocks of material as well as a different sequence of sayings in some of the chapters. These differences have been explained in various ways. On the one hand, the scholarly consensus is that the LXX is a relatively free translation of the Hebrew text, so that many of the differences are a direct result of the translational techniques and stylistic devices used by the translator(s) and do not reflect a Hebrew text that differed from the MT.⁶² Furthermore, in certain cases the differences reflect the Hellenistic context in which the translation was carried out,⁶³ though the translator(s) remained fundamentally Jewish in outlook.⁶⁴ On the other hand, some of the

⁶¹ For a helpful overview of the text and ancient versions of Proverbs, see Richard J. Clifford, "Observations on the Text and Versions of Proverbs," in Barré, *Wisdom, You Are My Sister*, 47–61. On the Septuagint of Proverbs, see Paul de Lagarde, *Anmerkungen zur griechischen Übersetzung der Proverbien* (Leipzig: Brockhaus, 1863); Ant J. Baumgartner, *Étude critique sur l'état du texte des Proverbes d'après les principales traductions anciennes* (Leipzig: Drugulin, 1890); Gillis Gerleman, *Studies in the Septuagint. III: Proverbs* (Lunds Universitets Årsskrift, N.F. Avd. 1, 52:3; Lund: Gleerup, 1956); Johann Cook, *The Septuagint of Proverbs: Jewish and/or Hellenistic Proverbs? Concerning the Hellenistic Colouring of LXX Proverbs* (VTSup 69; Leiden: Brill, 1997); and Gerhard Taubers Schmidt, *Secondary Parallelism: A Study of Translation Technique in LXX Proverbs* (Academia Biblica 15; Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2004). A concordance to the LXX of Proverbs is provided by J. David Thompson, *A Critical Concordance to the Septuagint Proverbs* (Computer Bible 70; Wooster: Biblical Research Associates, 1999).

⁶² J. Weingren, "Rabbinic-Type Commentary in the LXX Version of Proverbs," in *Proceedings of the Sixth World Congress of Jewish Studies* (4 vols.; Jerusalem: World Union of Jewish Studies, 1977), 1:407–15, esp. 411–13, points out that in some instances the LXX is simply quoting various verses from Proverbs or other biblical books. Weingren attributes these quotations and other differences (glosses, editorial comments, etc.) to Jewish scribes in Alexandria, so that they were already present in the Hebrew text that the LXX translated.

⁶³ Proverbs as a book comprises several collections of material that date from various periods and has obviously grown over time. The basic completion of this process is usually dated to the Persian period (see, e.g., Harold C. Washington, *Wealth and Poverty in the Instruction of Amenemope and the Hebrew Proverbs* [SBLDS 142; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1994], 111–33) and is thus fundamentally pre-hellenistic (see, however, Al Wolters, "Sôpiyyâ [Prov 31:27] as Hymnic Participle and Play on *Sophia*," *JBL* 104 [1985]: 577–87). Whether the LXX is the product of more than one translator is disputed, but the beginning of the translation is usually dated to the second century BCE, and the work clearly reflects a sophisticated knowledge of Hellenistic literary styles as well as some acquaintance with philosophical texts and traditions, including Aristotle's *Historia animalium*. See esp. Gillis Gerleman, "The Septuagint Proverbs as a Hellenistic Document," *OstSt* 8 (1950): 15–27, and *Proverbs*, esp. 11–35, 52–57; and Cook, *Septuagint of Proverbs*, 164–68, 318–19.

⁶⁴ For this emphasis, see Johann Cook, "Hellenistic Influence in the Septuagint

differences are extremely difficult if not impossible to attribute to the translator of the LXX, so that it is quite likely that he was working with a recension that was distinct from that used by the Masoretes.⁶⁵

In the case of Prov 3:11–12, the LXX differs from the MT in several ways, but only two of these can be discussed here.⁶⁶ To begin with, the counsel in these verses is explicitly addressed to “my son” (3:11), an address that occurs throughout the book of Proverbs but especially in chapters 1–9, the first collection of proverbs in the book (1:8, 10, 15; 2:1; 3:1, 21; 4:10, 20; 5:1; 6:1, 3, 20; 7:1).⁶⁷ Both the MT and the LXX have this address, but its placement differs. The MT begins, “The discipline of YHWH, my son, do not despise,” so that the emphasis falls on Yahweh’s discipline (מוסר) as something not to be repudiated, not on the sonship of the person addressed. The address “my son” occurs here in the middle of the line, as it does elsewhere in Proverbs.⁶⁸

Book of Proverbs,” in *VII Congress of the International Organization for Septuagint and Cognate Studies* (ed. C. E. Cox; SBLSCS 31; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1991), 341–53, and “The Septuagint Proverbs as a Jewish-Hellenistic Document,” in *VIII Congress of the International Organization for Septuagint and Cognate Studies* (ed. L. Greenspoon and O. Munnich; SBLSCS 41; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1995), 349–65.

⁶⁵ See esp. Emanuel Tov, “Recensional Differences Between the Masoretic Text and the Septuagint of Proverbs,” in *Of Scribes and Scrolls: Studies on the Hebrew Bible, Intertestamental Judaism, and Christian Origins presented to John Strugnell on the Occasion of His Sixtieth Birthday* (ed. H. W. Attridge, J. J. Collins, and T. H. Tobin; College Theology Society Resources in Religion 5; Lanham: University Press of America, 1990), 43–56; and Clifford, “Observations,” 51.

⁶⁶ The differences between the MT and the LXX pale in comparison to those between the MT and the lemmata in Hamam’s late ninth-century Armenian commentary on Proverbs. The origin of these lemmata (translations of passages from Proverbs that precede each section of the commentary) is unknown, for Hamam’s commentary presupposes a different Armenian text than that given in the lemmata. The lemma to Prov 3:11–12 reads as follows: “My son, do not abandon the instruction of the wise doctor, and do not fall away when reprimanded by him. For he who loves God” (trans. by Robert W. Thomson, *Hamam: Commentary on the Book of Proverbs* [Hebrew University Armenian Studies 5; Leuven: Peeters, 2005], 57). The lemma, which breaks off after “For he who loves God,” is continued by Hamam’s commentary: “and wishes to be loved by him cannot be obliging [to himself].”

⁶⁷ For the use of this address outside the first collection of proverbs, see 23:15, 19, 26; 24:13, 21; 27:11; 31:2. On addresses to “sons” in the titles and texts of works from ancient Egypt and Mesopotamia, see K. A. Kitchen, “Proverbs and Wisdom Books of the Ancient Near East: The Factual History of a Literary Form,” *TynBul* 28 (1977): 69–114, esp. 80–84.

⁶⁸ The placement of the address “my son” varies in the MT of Proverbs. Usually it has the initial position (e.g., 1:10, 15; 2:1; 3:1, 21; 4:20; 5:1; 6:1; 7:1), whereas at other times it is in the second (e.g., 1:8; 4:10; 6:20), third (3:11; 5:20), or even fourth position (6:3). The plural address “O sons” is, by contrast, always in the second position (4:1; 5:7; 7:24; 8:32).

The LXX, by contrast, places the address “son” at the beginning of the saying, thereby giving more emphasis to the addressee of the counsel.⁶⁹ In this case, the transposition is undoubtedly due to the translator, who occasionally makes similar transpositions in other passages, though not consistently.⁷⁰

The second difference concerns the text of Prov 3:12b. In the MT Yahweh’s rebuking of the one he loves (3:12a) is compared to what a human father does to a favored son: “even as a father the son in whom he delights” (3:12b). What is important to note is that since no verb is used, the reader naturally understands the same verb that was used in 3:12a, namely, “rebukes” (יָכַח), which is a cognate of the noun “rebuke” (תּוֹכַחַת) in 3:11b.⁷¹ In short, the form of the rebuke or discipline⁷² is not specified, and corporal punishment, though frequent in Proverbs, is not explicitly mentioned in 3:12b. Indeed, “rebuke” is often purely verbal castigation, involving no infliction of physical pain (e.g., Ezek 3:26; Amos 5:10; Prov 1:23, 25, 30; 28:23; etc.), though in other instances it can also be accompanied by physical acts or have a physical connotation. The LXX, by contrast, specifies corporal punishment: “and whips (μαστιγοῖ) every son whom he receives.”⁷³

⁶⁹ Contrast Philo, who retains the word order of Prov 3:11 when he refers to this passage in *Congr.* 177: παιδείας θεοῦ, υἱέ. For Philo and the biblical sapiential tradition, see Jean Laporte, “Philo in the Tradition of Biblical Wisdom Literature,” in *Aspects of Wisdom in Judaism and Early Christianity* (ed. R. L. Wilken; Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1975), 103–41.

⁷⁰ In Prov 6:20 he moves the address from the second to the initial position in the line, and in 6:3 he shifts it from the fourth to the second position. Yet he is not consistent; in 1:8 and 4:10 he retains the address in the second position, and he omits it entirely in 1:15 and 5:20. He also turns the plural “sons” of 5:7; 7:24; and 8:32 into an address to a singular “son” (υἱέ); he retains the plural address “sons” only in 4:1, rendering it with παῖδες (“children”) to link it more closely with the following word, παιδείαν. The latter, παιδεία, is of course literally “instruction given to a child (παῖς).” That it frequently has the sense of “discipline” points to the rigors and reproof that were part of ancient childrearing and education.

⁷¹ “Rebuke” is a central concept in Proverbs, with the noun occurring some sixteen times and the verb ten times.

⁷² For the close association between יָכַח and יָסַר see Ps 6:1; 38:1; 94:10; Prov 9:7. For תּוֹכַחַת and מוֹסֵר used together, see Prov 5:12; 6:23; 12:1; 15:5, 10, 31–32; 29:15. For יָסַר and תּוֹכַחַת see Ps 39:12 (Eng. 39:11), a passage where תּוֹכַחַת has the sense of “punishment” for sin (*HALOT* 4:1699; for this sense see also Ezek 5:15; 25:17; Ps 73:14).

⁷³ Philo, *Congr.* 177, gives Prov 3:12b exactly as it appears in the LXX, so that his text also has μαστιγοῖ. His version of Prov 3:11–12a, by contrast, deviates from that of the LXX in several ways.

The LXX's use of "whips" (or "scourges") has led to a small debate as to whether a Hebrew term for whipping, such as כָּאֵב rather than the וּכְאֵב of the MT, was in the translator's *Vorlage*.⁷⁴ While that possibility cannot be completely excluded,⁷⁵ it is much more likely that the translator has read the unpointed Hebrew word וּכְאֵב as a verb meaning "to afflict" or "to cause pain,"⁷⁶ not as a simile, as the Masoretes did ("even as a father").⁷⁷ Such an explanation, especially if it involved confusion in the script between the vav (ו) and the yod (י),⁷⁸ would account for the absence of the analogy with the father in the LXX, thus making all of 3:12 apply to Yahweh.⁷⁹ This interpretation of the Hebrew was

⁷⁴ See, for example, Crawford H. Toy, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Proverbs* (ICC; New York: Scribner, 1899), 66, and Roland E. Murphy in Murphy and E. Huwiler, *Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs* (New International Biblical Commentary; Peabody: Hendrickson, 1999), 24–25. See also the discussions of F. Delitzsch, *Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon*, vol. 6 of C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament in Ten Volumes* (n.d.; repr. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980), 91; William McKane, *Proverbs: A New Approach* (OTL; Philadelphia: Westminster, 1970), 294; Whybray, *Proverbs*, 65; Roland E. Murphy, *Proverbs* (WBC 22; Nashville: Nelson, 1998), 20 n. 12a; and Bruce K. Waltke, *The Book of Proverbs: Chapters 1–15* (NICOT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2004), 237–38 n. 12. But the proposed *Vorlage* would mean that Prov 3:12b referred to individuals as "sons" of God, and apart from the Davidic king, such an idea is otherwise unattested in the HB. On this point see Michael V. Fox, *Proverbs 1–9* (AB 18A; New York: Doubleday, 2000), 152, who raises the possibility that the original text had two words and read "and he afflicts him, as a father (does) to a son he loves." In that case, the first word would have been lost owing to haplography.

⁷⁵ Some modern English translations follow the LXX in rendering Prov 3:12b, including the NAB ("and he chastises the son he favors"), the NEB ("and he punishes a favourite son"), the REB ("and he punishes the son who is dear to him"), and the Bible in Basic English ("and makes the son in whom he has delight undergo pain"). The JB retains the analogy with the father but supplies a new verb for v. 12b ("as a father checks a well-loved son").

⁷⁶ Cf. Job 5:18, where the hiphil of כָּאֵב is rendered in the LXX with ἀλγεῖν ποιεῖ.

⁷⁷ For an explanation along these lines, see *inter alia* T. T. Perowne, *The Proverbs* (Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1899), 54; Gerleman, *Proverbs*, 47; and Harold W. Attridge, *The Epistle to the Hebrews* (Hermeneia; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1989), 361.

⁷⁸ See esp. Richard J. Clifford, *Proverbs: A Commentary* (OTL; Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1999), 50, who argues that the MT and LXX "probably read the same letters" at the beginning of Prov 3:12b since the vav and the yod "were often confused in the script."

⁷⁹ A different solution is proposed by A. Kaminka, "Septuaginta und Targum zu Proverbia," *HUCA* 8–9 (1931–32): 169–91, who argues that the Aramaic targum of Proverbs was done prior to the LXX and influenced the renderings of its translator. The targum of Prov 3:12b reads "even as a father who scourges his son" or "like a father who corrects his son" (the latter is the rendering of John F. Healey, *The Targum of Proverbs* [ArBib 15; Collegeville: Liturgical, 1991], 16). Kaminka, "Septuaginta," 179, thinks that the targumist has derived the idea of scourging/correcting (רָדַד) from the יִרְצֶה of the MT, but read as a piel, not a qal (cf. the targum to Job 20:10). In his

quite likely prompted by several factors, including the close connection between the “rod” and “rebuke” in Prov 28:15 (“a rod and rebuke [תוכחת] give wisdom”) as well as the link between “striking” and “rebuking” in Prov 19:25. In the latter case, the LXX translator renders the word “strike” (תכה) with μαστιγούμενου (“whip, scourge”),⁸⁰ the same verb that he uses in 3:12. An equally important factor may have been the translator’s memory of 2 Sam 7:14–15, where Yahweh promises to “rebuke” his “son” (the Davidic king) “with the rod of men, with the stripes of the sons of men.” That promise of divine corporal punishment, moreover, is intimately linked to an affirmation of Yahweh’s steadfast love (חסד) for his son, which he insists that he will never take away (2 Sam 7:15).⁸¹ If these suggestions are correct, it means that the translator has interpreted יוכיח (“rebukes”) in 3:12a as implying corporal punishment for a beloved son and has proceeded to interpret 3:12b as though it were an instance of synonymous parallelism.⁸²

HEBREWS 12

The author of Hebrews quotes Prov 3:11–12 almost exactly as it appears in the LXX, with the only difference being his addition of μου after υἱέ (“my son”).⁸³ Treating this proverb as an “exhortation” (παρακλήσεως), like his own discourse (Heb 13:22; see also 6:18), he anticipates its warning against growing weary (μηδὲ ἐκλύου) (Prov 3:11b = Heb 12:5b) by

view, that explanation also provides the explanation for why the targum lacks “in whom he delights.” But that hypothesis shatters on the necessity of dating the targum of Proverbs to no later than the third century BCE, whereas the targum is much more likely a considerably later work that renders the same recension of Proverbs as the MT while also making use of both the LXX and the Peshitta (2nd cent. CE). See Clifford, “Observations,” 59–60.

⁸⁰ See also Ps 73:14 for another instance of “striking” (נגוט, LXX: μεμαστιγούμενος) connected with a “rebuke” (תוכחת). For the use of “whipping” language in the LXX of Proverbs, see 3:12; 17:10; 19:25, 29; 26:3; 27:22.

⁸¹ See also Ps 89:19–37, esp. 89:24, 26, 28, 32–33. The links between 2 Sam 7:14–15 and Prov 3:11–12 are used as evidence by Johnny E. Miles in support of his provocative but improbable thesis that Prov 1–9 is a satire on Solomon, and that the latter is the “son” being reproved in Prov 3:11–12. See his *Wise King—Royal Fool: Semiotics, Satire and Proverbs 1–9* (JSOTSup 399; London: T&T Clark, 2004), 61.

⁸² Interpreting the line in terms of synonymous parallelism was also facilitated by the close association between “loves” (אהב) in v. 12a and “favors” (רצה) in v. 12b, which is also found in Prov 16:13 (“Righteous lips are the delight [רצון] of a king, and he loves [אהב] those who speak what is right”).

⁸³ The addition has the result of incidentally bringing the address into conformity with that of the Hebrew Bible (בני).

pointing to Christ's endurance (ὑπέμεινεν: Heb 12:2; ὑπομεμενηκότα: 12:3) as a compelling model for their own endurance (ὑπομονῆς: 12:2; ὑπομένετε: 12:7). If they follow Christ's example, they will not grow weary (ἐκλυόμενοι: 12:3), especially when they recognize the far greater challenge that "the pioneer and perfecter" of their faith endured (12:2). Whereas Christ suffered hostility at the hands of sinners (12:3), they are experiencing the παιδεία of a loving divine father. The author capitalizes fully on the LXX's transposition of "son" to the beginning of the line, three times highlighting the status of the readers/hearers of this exhortation as "sons" (12:5, 7, 8).

Indeed, he goes totally beyond his scriptural text by introducing a contrast between the painful discipline to which all full-fledged "sons" are subjected and the absence of such discipline for "illegitimate bastards" (νόθοι: 12:8).⁸⁴ Severe discipline is thus the sign of genuine sonship, for, as Prov 3:12b LXX affirms, the Lord flogs "every (πάντα) son whom he accepts (παράδεχεται)."⁸⁵ The language of "accepting" or "admitting" sons in the author's biblical text led him to think of "sons" who were not "received" or "acknowledged" by their biological fathers, but rather "rejected" (cf. 12:17: ἀπεδοκιμάσθη). But instead of making the common observation that such illegitimate children do not have the same legal rights and privileges as the legitimate ones, the author notes the lack of discipline that they receive. The dire consequence of not being subjected to discipline is the lack of moral formation, the failure to develop "righteousness" (δικαιοσύνης: 12:11) and "holiness" (ἀγιότητος: 12:10). In not being subjected to the whip, an illegitimate boy might seem to his peers to be a "lucky bastard," but he is not. According to Jewish tradition, νόθοι, especially undisciplined ones, often die prematurely,⁸⁶ whereas the author of Hebrews, in keeping with the sapiential tradition, affirms that sons who accept discipline "will live" (ζήσομεν: 12:9).⁸⁷ If νόθοι did survive to old age, however, all too

⁸⁴ For νόθοι in the Greek world, see esp. Daniel Ogden, *Greek Bastardy in the Classical and Hellenistic Periods* (Oxford Classical Monographs; Oxford: Clarendon, 1996).

⁸⁵ In the MT, the rebuking of a "favored" son implies that *all* sons, without exception, are disciplined. That is, if the father's "favorite" is not spared, how much less so are the other sons? Therefore, when the LXX translator inserts "every" before "son" he is correctly indicating this implication of the Hebrew text.

⁸⁶ For premature death as the fate of illegitimate children in some Jewish texts, see Wis 3:16, 18; Sir 23:25; *1 Enoch* 10:9; *b. Yebam.* 78b.

⁸⁷ See the texts mentioned earlier in this article about beaten sons living and unbeaten ones dying, esp. *Words of Ahiqar*, Sayings 3–4, and the first recension of the Aramaic version of those sayings; Prov 19:18; Prov 23:13–14; P. Insinger 9.6, 12–13; *Maxims of Ptahhotep* 42.

frequently they grew up to become like the fornicating, profane Esau (12:16), “rejected” sons who do not obtain the inheritance reserved for beloved, disciplined children (12:17).⁸⁸

Our author thus stresses sonship and discipline, not corporal punishment per se. However, since the latter was a conspicuous and standard feature of ancient παιδεία, it remains implicit throughout his discussion. Inasmuch as corporal punishment always involved physical pain (λύπη; 12:11) but not usually the shedding of blood (12:4), the idea of the Lord scourging his sons in love was appropriate to the situation of the readers, whose sufferings had not yet—in contrast to that of Christ—been bloody (12:4).

Just as the MT of Prov 3:11–12 compared Yahweh’s loving discipline to that of a human father, so does the author of Hebrews. But whereas the MT of Proverbs simply draws an analogy between divine and human discipline, Hebrews stresses the superiority of divine discipline. Human (σαρκός) fathers are “discipliners” (παιδευτάς; 12:9) who universally discipline their children (12:7c). Their discipline (ἐπαίδευον), however, is only “for a few days” (πρὸς ὀλίγας ἡμέρας) and administered from a limited perspective, that is, as the fathers deem appropriate (κατὰ τὸ δοκοῦν αὐτοῖς) to the situation (12:10). Because legitimate sons recognize that the “benefit” (τὸ συμφέρον) of such discipline is real, they not only submit (ὑποταγησόμεθα) to their earthly fathers but also “respect” (ἐνετρεπόμεθα) them (12:9). At the same time, the benefits of paternal παιδεία are limited when compared to divine discipline (οὐ πολὺ [δὲ] μᾶλλον, 12:9), which is administered, not by a “fleshly” father but by “the Father of spirits” (12:9). The key difference is the greater benefit, which is life (ζήσομεν, 12:9), holiness (ἀγιότητος, 12:10), peace (εἰρηνικὸν), and righteousness (δικαιοσύνης) (12:11). Furthermore, peace and holiness are essential conditions for seeing the Lord (12:14), making παιδεία absolutely indispensable. The readers of this exhortation are thus to acknowledge their status as genuine sons of their Father by submitting to his discipline, so that they may enjoy the “fruit” (καρπὸν) of God’s more excellent παιδεία (12:11). Since only a foolish bastard would treat lightly (ὀλιγόρει; 12:5a) the Lord’s discipline, the readers should accept the exhortation of Scripture and not become disheartened when rebuked by the Lord (ὕπ’ αὐτοῦ ἐλεγχόμενος; 12:5b).

⁸⁸ In describing Esau as a πορνός (Heb 12:16) the author is depicting him as the kind of individual who would beget νόθοι. For illegitimate children surviving to old age, see Wis 3:17.

In pointing to the “fruit” (καρπὸν) of peace and righteousness that is the result of God’s παιδεία, the author is adapting a common rhetorical and philosophical *topos* about ancient education. Given the rigors and hardships of ancient παιδεία, both philosophers and rhetoricians of the Greek and Roman worlds (like their ancient Near Eastern predecessors) justified the sufferings by pointing to the benefits that resulted from the experience. Like the author of Hebrews, they typically drew a contrast between the present (πρὸς μὲν τὸ παρὸν) experience of sorrow and pain (λύπη) as a child and the subsequent (ὕστερον δὲ) period of maturity when the benefit (τὸ συμφέρον) of the exercises (γεγυμνασμένοις) in discipline brought joy (χαρῶς) and pleasure to those who had experienced them (12:11). In doing so, they shared the same hortatory purpose as the author of Hebrews, for they were encouraging their young charges to persevere in order to enjoy the subsequent benefits. Furthermore, just like the author of Hebrews (12:16–17), they also knew that the rejection of discipline led to tragic consequences for the moral life, and they depicted the consequences in the same way that the sages of ancient Israel did in the book of Proverbs.

For example, Xenophon depicts Socrates as arguing for the necessity of παιδεία for everyone, especially for those with the greatest natural gifts. He does so by making the traditional comparison of human παιδεία to the domestication and training of animals, arguing that

thoroughbreds by their spirit and mettle develop into serviceable and splendid creatures, if they are broken in as colts, but if unbroken, prove intractable and sorry jades; and high-bred puppies, keen workers and good tacklers of game, make first-rate hounds and useful dogs, if well trained, but, if untrained, turn out stupid, crazy, disobedient brutes. It is the same with human beings. The most highly gifted, the youths of ardent soul, capable of doing whatever they attempt, if educated and taught their duty grow into excellent and useful men; for manifold and great are their good deeds. But untrained and untaught, these same become utterly evil and mischievous; for without knowledge to discern their duty, they often put their hand to vile deeds, and through the very grandeur and vehemence of their nature, they are uncontrollable and intractable: therefore manifold and great are their evil deeds. (*Mem.* 4.1.3–4 [Marchant, LCL])

The contrast between the current pain associated with παιδεία and the subsequent pleasure when its benefits were reaped was most famously celebrated in a saying that was attributed to various individuals. The basic saying was, “The roots of education are bitter, but the fruits are

sweet,” with the word “fruit” sometimes given in the singular (καρπὸν), as in Heb 12:11, and sometimes in the plural.⁸⁹ This saying was occasionally attributed to Aristotle, Cato, Cicero, or Demosthenes, but it was most often attributed to Isocrates, and it was elaborated in chreiai by different rhetoricians, especially Libanius.⁹⁰ The latter attributes to Isocrates the same essential situation as the author of Hebrews, namely, that of flagging zeal because of the sorrows and pains of παιδεία:

When Isocrates saw young men running away from toil out of fear and considering only the initial sweat but not thinking also of the profit that comes from toil—what does he do? By setting the end alongside the beginning and the pleasure alongside what is painful (λυπηροῖς), he made the young men more enthusiastic on account of the pleasure rather than more discouraged on account of the pain. “For education,” he says, “has a root but it has fruits as well; and to the former bitterness is attached, but to the latter the sweetest pleasure is closely joined.”⁹¹

Libanius’s elaboration of this chreia gives attention to both the bitterness of παιδεία and its later pleasures and profits. Corporal punishment naturally belongs among the bitter aspects of παιδεία. For example, if the tasks assigned by the teacher have been badly prepared, “there are reproofs, reproaches, blows, and threats regarding the future” (*Progym.* 3, Chreia 3.7). The same kind of treatment—only worse—is extended by the boy’s paedagogus, to whom the father has entrusted his son with almost no restrictions in regard to treatment. “This is why beating, throttling, torturing and whatever is characteristic behavior of owners toward their slaves” is doled out by the paedagogus to the boy. “All [such actions] these parents deem it proper for those in charge of their sons to do, so that there can be no excuse afterwards” (*Progym.* 3, Chreia 2.9). Consequently, Libanius can describe the paedagogus as follows:

⁸⁹ The saying is mentioned *inter alia* by Attridge, *Hebrews*, 364 n. 75. It is striking that “fruit” occurs at Heb 12:11 and “root of bitterness” at Heb 12:15, but the two terms are not linked in the same way as in the Greek saying.

⁹⁰ The evidence for this saying and for its chreia elaborations has been collected by Ronald F. Hock and Edward N. O’Neil, *The Chreia in Ancient Rhetoric*, Vol. I: *The Progymnasmata* (SBLTT 27; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1986), 325–26.

⁹¹ Libanius, *Progym.* 3, Chreia 3.5. This and all translations of Libanius’s *progymnasmata* are those of Ronald F. Hock and Edward N. O’Neil, *The Chreia and Ancient Rhetoric: Classroom Exercises* (SBLWGRW 2; Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2002), 171.

He's harsher than his masters, always standing over the young man, almost glued to his side, continually urging him on, constantly reprimanding him, averting him from laziness, ordering him to pay attention to his tasks, praising none of his accomplishments but berating him excessively over petty matters, accompanying him under arms, as one might say, since he brandishes a staff or whip in his right hand. (*Progym.* 3, Chreia 3.8)

And how do parents treat their sons when they are at home? Are they perhaps more "kindhearted toward their sons?" To which Libanius answers, "They are not a bit more gentle than the people already mentioned! Rather they are much harsher. And so a second struggle takes place at home that is no easier than the struggles in the schoolrooms," with both father and mother making sure that the boy's toils and blows continue day and night (*Progym.* 3, Chreia 3.9–11).⁹²

Over against the bitterness and pain of παιδεία, Libanius sets the pleasures and benefits that result, beginning with a paraphrase of Isocrates:

[Isocrates says,] "Rather look at the fruits, and by setting them alongside the root you will quickly discover pleasure to be a counter-balance to the pains."... For when the young man is fully educated,... the Town Hall means greater pleasure than the schoolroom did pain [λύπην], and greater than the blows is the garland.... Do you see that the "fruits" are naturally the opposite of the "root"? Do you see that enjoyment in the case of education is greater than the toil? Do you see that the most delightful things of all overcome the earliest dreariness?... [E]ducation is [thus] something important, admirable, and most beneficial [συμφορώτατον] to the one who possesses it and is envied by those who do not. (*Progym.* 3, Chreia 3.12–13, 20)

⁹² Compare the elaboration on the same chreia of Isocrates by Aphthonius, *Progym.* 3: "Those who long for education attach themselves to educational leaders, whom it is frightening to approach and very stupid to abandon. Fear comes on boys both when they are there and when they are about to go to school. Next after the teachers come the pedagogues, fearful to see and more dreadful when they beat the boys. Fright anticipates the discovery, and punishment follows fright; they go looking for the boys' mistakes but regard the boys' successes as their own doing. Fathers are more strict than pedagogues, dictating the routes to be followed, demanding boys go straight to school, and showing suspicion of the market place. And if there is need to punish, fathers ignore their natural feelings. But the boy who has experienced these things, when he comes to manhood wears a crown of virtue." The translation is that of George A. Kennedy, *Progymnasmata: Greek Textbooks of Prose Composition and Rhetoric* (SBLWGRW 10; Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2003), 98.

CONCLUDING COMMENTS

As the preceding discussion suggests, when the author of Hebrews quotes Prov 3:11–12 he is drawing upon an ancient tradition of education that placed a high premium, at both home and the school, on corporal punishment. He does not question the legitimacy of that tradition but takes it over as transmitted to him by the Septuagint and uses it to exhort the readers of his “word of exhortation.” In his exegesis of Scripture he places its words about divine παιδεία within the social world of his readers and hearers, all of whom had experienced painful παιδεία at home and at least some of whom had endured blows and threats from teachers and paedagogues. Just as Greco-Roman philosophers and rhetoricians encouraged their students to persevere so as to reap the benefits of their training, so the author of Hebrews encourages some early Christians to do the same, depicting the Lord’s discipline as infinitely superior to that of human fathers, especially in the joyful results that it produced. His point is clear: If children accept discipline and corporal punishment from their parents, how much more so should believers accept their heavenly Father’s rebukes and blows? If adults looking retrospectively at the benefits of the παιδεία they had received from parents and teachers were often grateful to these disciplinarians, how much more grateful should the readers be to the divine disciplinarian for the training that they are currently receiving, which will enable them to participate in the Lord’s holiness (12:10) and to see him (12:14)? The author of Hebrews thus unites his exegesis of the sacred text with a knowledge of the lived context of his audience and their assumptions about good parenting, and he calls on them to make the appropriate response to this exhortation (12:12–13).

PART THREE

THE HISTORY OF INTERPRETATION

THE EARLY RECEPTION OF HEBREWS 6:4–6

Patrick Gray

Few aspects of the Epistle to the Hebrews have occasioned more—or more lively—debate than its teaching on repentance. In Heb 6:4–6, the author exhorts the audience to press on towards perfection:

For it is impossible to restore again to repentance those who have once been enlightened, who have tasted the heavenly gift, who have become partakers of the Holy Spirit, and have tasted the goodness of the word of God and the powers of the coming age, if they then fall away, since they recrucify the Son of God on their own account and are holding him up to contempt.

Contemporary church teaching is frequently at odds with the rigorist interpretation of this passage that sees the author as allowing no repentance for sins after baptism.¹ It also played a role in the doctrinal controversies of the Reformation period.² Many of these later debates are but sophisticated variations on themes generated by patristic exegetes. Particularly in the western church, the full acceptance of Hebrews in

¹ According to the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1994), §1446, Christ instituted the sacrament of penance for sinful church members, “above all for those who, since Baptism, have fallen into grave sin, and have thus lost their baptismal grace.” The teaching of Hebrews appears to contradict the popular Baptist slogan that a Christian is “once saved, always saved,” as well as the related Calvinist doctrine of the perseverance of the saints. (On the relatively recent vintage of “eternal security” language in Baptist confessions, see Dale Moody, *The Word of Truth: A Summary of Christian Doctrine Based on Biblical Revelation* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1981], 361–64.) Calvin himself acknowledged the harshness of Hebrews’ teaching but reconciles it with the gospel by adverting to the doctrine of predestination: God favors only the elect with the spirit of regeneration and not the reprobate (*Institutes of the Christian Religion*, 3.3.21–23). For the objection that the harsh warnings of Hebrews were appropriate in the first century but are no longer “wise pastoral counsel to be followed by any minister concerned to shepherd his lost sheep,” see Norman H. Young, “Is Hebrews 6.1–8 Pastoral Nonsense?” *Colloq* 15 (1982): 57.

² Jan Hus, e.g., applied the warnings about apostasy to Catholic priests guilty of simony, shortly after which he was burned at the stake; cf. Craig R. Koester, *Hebrews* (AB 36; New York: Doubleday, 2001), 33. Because its teaching on repentance runs counter to the “pure” gospel preached by Paul, Martin Luther essentially relegated Hebrews to deuterocanonical status and places it at the end of his 1522 edition of the New Testament; cf. Kenneth Hagen, *Hebrews Commenting from Erasmus to Bèze: 1516–1598* (BGBE 23; Tübingen: Mohr, 1981), 6, 9–13.

the fourth century depended in no small part on the resolution of the theological problems posed by Heb 6:4–6.

Implications for canonicity inevitably conditioned the interpretation of this and other thorny texts from an early stage. A few moments in the earliest reception history of Heb 6:4–6 still remain visible, namely, in *I Clement*, the *Shepherd of Hermas*, and the *Quo vadis* scene in the *Martyrdom of Peter*. Questions that figured prominently in the debates of the third and fourth centuries have significance that extends beyond the narrow domain of ecclesiastical politics, but attention to the earlier instances of appropriation yields critical insights into those reading habits that fostered the rise of a distinctive literary culture.³ This essay presents a brief case study that demonstrates the inadequacy of the view that exegesis prior to the early modern period is uniformly “pre-critical” or “dogmatic” and thus belongs to “the prehistory of New Testament scholarship.”⁴

TERTULLIAN

The earliest instances of appropriation to be examined below appear before Hebrews becomes entangled in the debates of the third century. Tertullian marks a turning point in charting the trajectory of interpretation, when one begins to see such controverted questions as authorship, canonicity, and official church doctrine begin to dominate the discussion of Hebrews. He alludes to Heb 6:4–6 twice in his treatise “On Modesty” (*De pudicitia*), written early in his Montanist period. In his discussion of general principles in interpreting parables, Tertullian uses Hebrews in such a way that a concern for the soteriological function of Christian scripture is evident. Luke’s parable of the prodigal son (15:11–32) serves as Tertullian’s test case for which interpretations are “useful” or “harmful” for salvation. The whole system of salvation, he says, is threatened by the interpretation that weakens the church’s ability to maintain discipline among its members (*Pud.* 9.8). For Tertullian, if the parable applies allegorically to those already in the Christian fold, it has a deleterious effect upon church discipline. In this “harm-

³ Cf. Frances Young, *Biblical Exegesis and the Formation of Christian Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997).

⁴ See, e.g., W. G. Kümmel’s characterization of biblical interpretation prior to the eighteenth century (*The New Testament: The History of the Investigation of its Problems* [trans. S. MacLean Gilmour and Howard Clark Kee; Nashville: Abingdon, 1972], 13).

ful” reading, the son’s inheritance is the sacrament of baptism. If this inheritance can be so easily recovered after it is squandered, the parable would then encourage moral laxness (9.10). With the baptismal renewal of the apostate, “Christ will again be slaughtered” (9.11: *rursus illi mactabitur Christus*).

This last remark in the context of Tertullian’s exposition ostensibly refers to the father’s command to kill the fatted calf for the prodigal in Luke 15:24. That this is a reference to Heb 6:6 (“they recrucify the Son of God”) becomes clearer in the lesson he draws. Luke’s parable should be read so as to refer to the first calling of the non-Christian and not to a second restoration of the Christian, as this would leave open the possibility of repentance open to adulterers and fornicators (9.16). The citation of Heb 6:6 thus functions as a *reductio ad absurdum* in Tertullian’s argument.

Confirmation that Tertullian is reading Luke and Hebrews in tandem comes a few chapters later, when he quotes from the latter in denying post-baptismal repentance to those guilty of grave sin (*Pud.* 20.3). Tertullian cites Barnabas, “a companion of the apostles,” and identifies his source as an “Epistle to the Hebrews” (20.2). Since he proceeds to quote Heb 6:4–6, there is no doubt that this is the canonical letter and not the *Epistle of Barnabas*, which shows little interest in penitential practices.⁵ Hebrews proves for Tertullian that the apostles never taught a “second repentance” for adulterers and fornicators (*Pud.* 20.5). The apocryphal “‘Shepherd’ of adulterers,” says Tertullian in a swipe at *Hermas*, is not widely accepted among the churches as is Hebrews (20.2). Tertullian’s use of Hebrews demonstrates its growing stature in North Africa and elsewhere since he cites it to convince his interlocutors. The strength of his position is in the support it has from apostolic precedent. Tertullian moreover argues that his rigorist reading of Hebrews more closely conforms to the *regula fidei*. Much of the Latin church disagreed and Hebrews was neglected in the West for much of the third century.

⁵ Tertullian, *Pud.* 20.3: “[I]mpossibile est enim, inquit, eos qui semel inluminati sunt et donum caeleste gustauerunt et participauerunt Spiritum sanctum et uerbum Dei dulce gustauerunt, occidente iam aëro cum exciderint, rursus reuocari in paenitentiam, refigentes cruci in semetipsos filium Dei et dedecorantes.” For the Latin text, see C. Micaelli and C. Munier, *La pudicité* (SC 394–395; Paris: Cerf, 1993). Before and after the citation of Heb 6:4–6, Tertullian also quotes respectively from v. 1 and vv. 7–8.

Part of the reason for the Western neglect of Hebrews can be seen in Tertullian's attribution of the letter to Barnabas. In the third century, scriptural status comes to depend in no small part upon Pauline authorship, and many writers questioned Hebrews' place in the Pauline corpus. Not until late in the fourth century, under the influence of Jerome, Athanasius, Hilary of Poitiers, and Lucifer of Calaris did the Western canon come into conformity with the Eastern by recognizing Hebrews as the work of Paul and thus canonical.⁶ Origen was a third-century exception, however, in that he made frequent use of Hebrews in his writings despite his doubts about its Pauline authorship.⁷ He died after being tortured during the Decian persecutions that would reignite the penitential controversies witnessed in Tertullian's writings (Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 6.39.5). This likely explains Origen's relative avoidance of the issue of apostasy and re-admittance in his interpretation of Heb 6:4–6; by the time it was once again a pressing ecclesiastical question, he was dead and therefore in no position to comment on it. In the century or so following the end of the persecutions, a number of theologians—Novatian, Ambrose, Gregory Nazianzen, John Chrysostom, and others—turned their attention to Hebrews and how it came to bear on the question of re-admitting apostates.

Tertullian therefore represents a transition in the reception history of this text. He claims that Hebrews enjoys wide acceptance, but his forceful defense of its rigorist stance suggests that acceptance is not universal.⁸ Apostolicity is crystallizing as a formal criterion for the conferral of canonical status, yet he appears unaware of traditions naming Paul as the author. Although accordance with the *regula fidei* is fast becoming a guiding hermeneutical principle, it is clear that there is no unanimously held view of the propriety of offering penance to lapsed Christians. Most intriguing is the way in which Tertullian employs Heb 6:6 as a control for the interpretation of Luke's parable of the prodigal. One might expect the reverse, that is, an exegete appealing to a document firmly established as Scripture in order to adjudicate between competing construals of a disputed text which has emerged

⁶ W. G. Kümmel, *Introduction to the New Testament* (rev. ed.; trans. Howard Clark Kee; Nashville: Abingdon, 1973), 499–501.

⁷ Rowan A. Greer, *The Captain of Our Salvation: A Study in the Patristic Exegesis of Hebrews* (BGBE 15; Tübingen: Mohr, 1973), 7–64.

⁸ Recall that Hebrews is absent from the Muratorian Canon, promulgated just a few decades before Tertullian is writing.

as a candidate for the canon. After Tertullian, strategies for solving the exegetical problems posed by Heb 6:4–6 develop along predictable theological lines. Before Tertullian, extant responses to the text had not fallen into any such standardized forms. These few examples repay closer attention.

I CLEMENT AND THE SHEPHERD OF HERMAS

The earliest appropriation of Heb 6:4–6 occurs in *1 Clement*. It is widely acknowledged that this document, composed just before the end of the first century, provides the first external attestation for Hebrews.⁹

Nowhere is the concentration of allusions higher than in *1 Clem.* 36, where one hears echoes of several passages in Hebrews (1:3–13; 2:17–18; 3:1; 4:15–16). The author refers to Jesus as high priest—a christological title unique to Hebrews in the NT—and quotes at some length from the encomium of Heb 1:3–13. He then writes of Jesus in *1 Clem.* 36.2,

Through him we fix our gaze on the heights of heaven, through him we see the reflection of his faultless and lofty countenance, through him the eyes of our hearts were opened, through him our foolish and darkened understanding blossoms towards the light, through him the Master willed that we should taste immortal knowledge.¹⁰

Without the abundant corroborating evidence from other passages in *1 Clement*, one might hesitate to identify here any echo of Heb 6:4–6.¹¹ The “tasting of immortal knowledge” (τῆς ἀθανάτου γνώσεως γεύσασθαι) reconfigures the repeated motif of “tasting” (γευσσάμενους)—of “the heavenly gift” in Heb 6:4 and of “the goodness of the word of God

⁹ Cf. Donald A. Hagner, *The Use of the Old and New Testaments in Clement of Rome* (NovTSup 34; Leiden: Brill, 1973), 179–95. Eusebius cites traditions identifying Clement as the translator or even the author of Hebrews (*Hist. eccl.* 3.38.3; 6.25.14).

¹⁰ This translation and the references to the Greek text here are taken from the Loeb edition of Kirsopp Lake, *The Apostolic Fathers I* (London: Heinemann, 1914).

¹¹ Other passages reflecting literary dependence are *1 Clem.* 9.3–4 (cf. Heb 11:5–7); 12.1–3 (cf. Heb 11:31); 17.1 (cf. Heb 11:37); 19.2 (cf. Heb 12:1); 21.9 (cf. Heb 4:12); 27.2 (cf. Heb 6:18); and 43.1 (cf. Heb 3:2–5). This evidence and other similarities in tone and theme led E. J. Goodspeed to theorize that Clement was motivated to write his Corinthian audience by the receipt of the Letter to the Hebrews, especially by the rebuke of Heb 5:12 (“First Clement Called Forth by Hebrews,” *JBL* 30 [1911]: 157–60).

and the powers of the age to come” in 6:5.¹² The “blossoming” of Clement’s readers’ “foolish and darkened understanding... towards the light” (ἡ ἀσύνετος καὶ ἐσκοτωμένη διάνοια... εἰς τὸ φῶς) amplifies Hebrews’ description of the hypothetical Christian sinner as having “once been enlightened” (ἅπαχ φωτισθέντας) in 6:4. This phrasing may reflect a subtle reading of Heb 6:4 in the context of 6:7–8, where the author uses a farming metaphor without explaining the point it supports: “Ground that drinks up the rain falling on it repeatedly, and that produces a crop useful to those for whom it is cultivated, receives a blessing from God. But if it produces thorns and thistles, it is worthless and on the verge of being cursed; its end is to be burned over” (NRSV). In *1 Clem.* 36.2, the use of agricultural or botanical language (“blooming towards the light”) functions to make the link between Heb 6:4–6 and 6:7–8 more explicit.

It is also quite possible that Clement’s diction reflects some discomfort with the notion that a second repentance is impossible. His use of ἀναθάλλει, “blooms *again*,” may suggest that it is indeed possible “to restore *again*” (Heb 6:6: ἀνακαινίζειν) to repentance those who have lapsed.¹³ Earlier in the letter Clement states that Jesus’ blood is precious “because it was poured out for our salvation, and brought the grace of repentance to all the world” (*1 Clem.* 7.4). A review of past generations reveals that God has called to repentance all who will accept the invitation. Jonah and, remarkably, Noah are the examples of past preachers of repentance whose listeners gained salvation, “though they were aliens to God” (7.6–7). In the following chapter he considers Israel’s prophets and “even the Master of the universe himself” who “spoke with an oath concerning repentance” (8.1–2).¹⁴ There follows a series of quotations from Isaiah and Ezekiel emphasizing the offer of μετάνοια extended to the house of Israel. God thus desires “to give to all his beloved a share in repentance” (8.5). Unlike the former passage, in which God invites those outside the covenant to turn for the first time, the latter passage concerns insiders, Israelites who have shirked the covenant to which they were party and thus need to be restored to repentance. Clement’s Christian readers are in an analogous position

¹² With this appropriation of the imagery, compare Basil’s later description of making progress good works as “tasting the good word” (*In Ebriosos* 1 [PG 31:445]).

¹³ For the same verb and imagery connected to perseverance in virtue, see Wis 4:3–5; Sir 1:18–20; 46:11–12.

¹⁴ Cf. Heb 6:13–18 for the motif of God swearing with an oath (ὄρκος).

to that of the Israelites. As these reflections come on the heels of a laudatory reference to Christian martyrs (*1 Clem.* 6.1–2; 7.1), the remarks on repentance provide encouragement to an audience that, like the audience of Hebrews, may soon face a test of their loyalty and stand in need of divine mercy for any failure of nerve. In terms of hortatory strategy, then, Clement opts to use the carrot while Hebrews uses the stick. His treatment of this theme early in the letter, together with the echoes of Heb 6:4–6 in *1 Clem.* 36, is a sign that he is not oblivious to the question of post-baptismal sin and apostasy that consumes later interpreters, even if he chooses to avoid direct engagement with it.

Even so fleeting an allusion to Hebrews gives some indication of the earliest reception it receives. Clement does not read the text through any predetermined doctrinal prism even though he is surely aware of the practical, theological, and perhaps even exegetical difficulties it poses. His recycling of the language and themes of Hebrews shows how thoroughly he has integrated them with his own outlook. Hebrews does not appear to enjoy canonical status in Clement's eyes, and nowhere does he employ introductory formulae appealing to its author's pre-eminence, as he does with Paul (*1 Clem.* 44.1; 47.1). Yet the hortatory use to which he puts Hebrews in *1 Clem.* 36 is hardly different from his use of Romans in chapter 35 and 1 Corinthians in chapters 47 and 49.¹⁵ That he has such high regard for a source not meriting mention by name is noteworthy.

The *Shepherd of Hermas*, an apocalyptic work also written in Rome not long after *1 Clement*, shows a far greater sensitivity to the problem of post-baptismal sin.¹⁶ While the probability that its author has read Hebrews is not quite as high as with *1 Clement*, no earlier extant document has the same degree of concern for the possibility of repentance after baptism.¹⁷ Whether Hermas should be considered an instance of

¹⁵ Hagner, *The Use of the Old and New Testaments in Clement of Rome*, 349.

¹⁶ The concern is present throughout the document, but see esp. Herm. *Vis.* 2.2.4–5; *Mand.* 4.2.1–4; 4.3.1–6; 12.3.3–6; *Sim.* 6.3.6; 8.6.1–6; 8.7.1–5; 9.14.1–3; 9.23.1–5; 9.26.6; 10.1.3. Some scholars place the beginning of the document's composition at the end of the first century (Carolyn Osiek, *The Shepherd of Hermas* [Hermeneia; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1999], 20) while others would date it closer to the end of the second century (Christine Mohrmann, "Les origines de la latinité chrétienne," *VC* 3 [1949]: 67–106). The consensus is that *Hermas* was written some time in the first half of the second century.

¹⁷ Karl Rahner, "Die Busslehre des Hirten des Hermas," *ZKT* 77 (1955): 385–431. The connection between *Hermas* and Hebrews on this point assumes that "enlightenment" in Heb 6:4 refers to baptism. Justin Martyr is the first to make this identification

the early reception of Heb 6:4–6 depends on one's construal of *Mand.* 4.3.1–6. "Some teachers," says the author, claim that "there is no second repentance beyond the one given when we went down into the water and received remission of our former sins."¹⁸

Is the author of Hebrews one of these teachers? The commentary tradition on Hebrews tends to answer this question in the affirmative while scholarship on *Hermas* is more divided. The angel in his reply to Hermas in *Mand.* 4.3.2 endorses the position of these anonymous teachers and seems to reflect knowledge of Heb 6:4–6: "You have heard correctly . . . for he who has received remission of sin ought never to sin again, but live in purity." This response and the question evoking it are at the very least indicative of a common tradition behind both texts but in isolation are not sufficient to establish literary dependence.

Evidence from elsewhere in *Hermas*, however, tips the scales in favor of the theory that its author is appropriating and developing ideas taken from Hebrews. At the beginning of the *Similitudes* (1.1) the recurring motif of the earthly realm as a foreign city or country for the Christian finds parallels in Hebrews (11:13; 13:14). References to apostasy from the living God (*Vis.* 2.3.2: τὸ ἀποστῆναι ἀπὸ θεοῦ ζῶντος) echo Hebrews at the level of terminology (Heb 3:12: ἀποστῆναι ἀπὸ θεοῦ ζῶντος).¹⁹ For it is impossible (Heb 6:4; Herm. *Sim.* 9.26.6: ἀδύνατον γάρ), according to both writers, for apostates to be saved because the time is short. Both writers also use the imagery of thorns and thistles in connection with the darkened understanding of believers who involve themselves in fruitless endeavors (Heb 6:7–8; Herm. *Mand.* 10.1.5). Goodspeed's suggestion that the receipt of the Letter to the Hebrews served as the decisive stimulus for the composition of *Hermas* is perhaps an over-

explicit (*I Apol.* 61.12; 65.1). Tertullian, who a few decades later would enter the fray over penitential practices, also makes the equation at the outset of his treatise on baptism (*De baptismo*). Raymond E. Brown argues that Hebrews would not have been unique in the NT period in understanding baptism as "enlightenment" (*The Gospel According to John* [2 vols.; AB 29–29A; Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1966–1970], 1:380). The story of the blind man in John 9:1–41 appears a number of times in early catacomb art as an illustration of Christian baptism and is later used as a reading for catechumens preparing for baptism. His physical blindness is contrasted with the sin of spiritual blindness in 9:30–41, and John is playing on the idea that the man was born in sin which can be removed only through "washing," his eyes thus becoming "illuminated."

¹⁸ The English translation and all references to the Greek text are taken from the Loeb edition of Kirsopp Lake, *The Apostolic Fathers II* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1913).

¹⁹ Cf. Herm. *Vis.* 3.7.2, 6; *Man.* 4.2.1, for the same language together with a reference also to hardness of heart (σκληροκαρδία), as in Heb 3:8: 13, 15.

statement of the case. These similarities, however, shift the burden of proof to those who reject the theory that the former is a source used by the latter.²⁰

While the angel concurs that there is no second repentance (ἐτέρᾳ μετάνοιᾳ), he immediately proceeds to qualify this absolute statement with reference to God's foreknowledge in *Mand.* 4.3.3–6. God established repentance as an act of mercy in light of the subtlety of the devil in tempting the Lord's servants, but even divine mercy has its limits. "After that great and holy calling," says the angel in 4.3.6, "if a man be tempted by the devil and sin, he has one repentance, but if he sin and repent repeatedly it is unprofitable...for scarcely shall he live." If *Hermas* is responding to Hebrews, the apparent inconsistency between *Mand.* 4.3.2 and 4.3.6 regarding post-baptismal penance is perhaps an attempt to make sense of the somewhat redundant phrase "to renew anew" (πάλιν ἀνακαίνιζεν) in Heb 6:6.²¹ Does the "renewal" coincide with the "illumination" or "enlightenment," that is, does it occur at baptism, or does the renewal spoken of here take place after baptism? In Heb 6:1, the author has already mentioned "repentance from dead works" as a basic teaching. *Hermas* takes for granted an initial repentance as required for baptism. Since he allows one occasion for repentance after baptism, he may be reading the "renewal" mentioned in Hebrews as this one opportunity after which it is impossible to be restored again (πάλιν) to repentance.

Hermas reads Hebrews in a way that reveals points of continuity as well as discontinuity between the contexts in which each author is working. On the one hand, a distinctively Christian theology of baptism and conversion is not yet fully formed in the first century when Hebrews is written. This is due to the relative newness of Christianity itself and to the disproportionate percentage of Christians who were recent converts from other faiths. Because the birth of Christianity is still very much a work in progress, the author of Hebrews is likely unaware of the full

²⁰ E. J. Goodspeed, *The Apostolic Fathers* (London: Independent, 1950), 97.

²¹ The verb ἀνακαίνιζεν is relatively rare in the LXX (Ps 38:3; 102:5; 103:30; Lam 5:21; 1 Macc 6:9) and occurs only here in the NT. The cognate forms ἀνακαινοῦν (2 Cor 4:16; Col 3:10) and ἀνακαίνωσις (Rom 12:2; Tit 3:5) occur, but these texts denote simple renewal and not the more peculiar idea of "renewing again." Cf. B. F. Westcott, *The Epistle to the Hebrews* (repr., Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1950), 150. *Hermas* is the only other early Christian text to use the same verb as Hebrews, each time in a discussion of conversion and fidelity to one's baptismal vows (*Sim.* 8.6.3: ἀνακαινίσαι τὰ πνεύματα αὐτῶν; 9.14.3: ἀνεκαίνισεν ἡμῶν τὸ πνεῦμα).

implications, conceivable applications, and potential misunderstandings of his argument in 6:4–6. Later in the second century, however, one finds more individuals who are born into Christian families in a more firmly established Christian subculture rather than converting as adults. Concomitant changes in the conceptualization of and practices surrounding conversion to Christianity, driven in part by these shifting demographics, no doubt had an effect on the way in which an author like Hermas would appropriate such a text.²²

Yet for all the differences in context, there is one constant: It remains possible to comprehend the full significance of one's conversion only after the fact. This fundamental dynamic changes only in degree when one moves into the second century. How are Christians to conduct themselves once they cross the threshold and join the community of believers? What can the community reasonably expect of itself and of its new initiates? And what happens when these expectations are not met? It can hardly have taken a century for the vexing social and theological problem of post-baptismal sin to arise. Paul's letters provide ample evidence that illumination did not lead immediately to sanctification. How is a Christian community to negotiate the tension between the ideal of "laying aside the sin that clings so closely" (Heb 12:1) and the inconvenient fact of human frailty?²³

Hebrews and Hermas pursue this question in connection with a congruent set of pressing concerns and pastoral strategies. A recurring theme in Hermas has to do with the pursuit of wealth and its capacity to serve as a distraction from one's duties to God and neighbor.²⁴ Inordinate attention to worldly goods—even, or perhaps especially, those acquired through honest, diligent business dealings—all too often diverts the believer from the straight and narrow path to heaven.²⁵ Hermas has

²² Cf. Alan Kreider, *The Change of Conversion and the Origin of Christendom* (Harrisburg, Pa.: Trinity Press International, 1999), xiv.

²³ According to Peter Lampe, whereas Hebrews is laying down a theoretical principle, Hermas reaches a compromise in working out the practical implications, while stopping short of establishing a formal system of penance (*From Paul to Valentinus: Christians at Rome in the First Two Centuries* [trans. M. Steinhauser; Minneapolis: Fortress, 2003], 94–95).

²⁴ Herm. *Vis.* 1.1.8–9; 3.6.5–7; *Sim.* 1.1–11; 2.5–10; 6.2.1–7; 8.8.1–2; 8.9.1–2; 9.20.2; 10.4.2–4. On this theme, see Carolyn Osiek, *Rich and Poor in the Shepherd of Hermas: An Exegetical-Social Investigation* (CBQMS 15; Washington, D.C.: Catholic Biblical Association, 1983).

²⁵ Compare, especially, the description in Herm. *Sim.* 1.1–6 of Christians as dwellers in a foreign country who should always be prepared to return to their own (heavenly)

in view apostasy at a more general level rather than the commission of individual sins after baptism but remains concerned with the specific causes, symptoms, and consequences of falling away. The distracting power of financial affairs is more powerful and more dangerous than one may realize. Deliberate, unequivocal blasphemy is hardly a requisite condition for apostasy (*Sim.* 6.2.4); rather, it is often the case that a person drifts slowly, almost imperceptibly into the danger zone from which it is difficult to return (cf. Heb 3:12–13).

Does it remain possible to become aware of having entered into spiritual peril after the fact? Yes. One tell-tale sign is a tendency to withdraw from fellowship with the saints (*Herm. Sim.* 8.8.1–2; 8.9.1; 9.20.2).²⁶ Even when absenteeism has not become an acute problem, failure to perform acts of charity causes division and disturbs the peace in the community (*Vis.* 3.9.2–4, 10; cf. Heb 12:14–15). This poses a serious threat to the wealthy in light of “the judgment which is coming” (*Vis.* 3.9.5). Such discord may deprive them of their very lives (*Vis.* 3.9.9). Mutual correction and exhortation provide a way to avoid this dire fate (*Vis.* 3.9.10).

This collocation of motifs bears a close resemblance to the line of argument found in Heb 10:19–39. There the author exhorts the audience to hold fast to their confession of faith, to practice mutual exhortation, and to provoke one another to love and good works (Heb 10:23–24; cf. 6:10; 13:15–16); the latter instructions, of course, are difficult to carry out when members are not attending the communal assemblies, yet it is all the more imperative “as [they] see the Day approaching” (v. 25).²⁷ Following the injunction against apostasy and the strong warning of impending judgment in Heb 10:26–31 which run parallel to the subject matter of Heb 6:4–6, the author commends the audience for their willingness to share their possessions and for their perception that “a better possession” awaits them in heaven (10:32–34). Their willingness to be thus dispossessed will result in the saving of their lives (10:39: εἰς περιποίησιν ψυχῆς).

city with the similar description of the faithful in Hebrews as “strangers on the earth” for whom God has prepared a city in the heavenly country (11:9–10, 13–16; 13:14).

²⁶ Osiek, *Rich and Poor*, 121–27.

²⁷ Hermas is not the only writer in the post-apostolic period concerned with absenteeism (*Did.* 4.2; *Barn.* 4.10; *Ign. Pol.* 4.2).

Both authors view the matter as one of great eschatological urgency—there may soon come a point when even those who have decided to repent will find that it is too late.²⁸ Finally, both authors use strikingly similar imagery to describe the fate of those who are distracted from the crucial task of repentance by financial affairs. They are like trees that are to be burnt, according to Hermas, because they have not borne fruit (Herm. *Sim.* 4.3–8). Hebrews, immediately after his warning about the impossibility of a second *μετάνοια*, speaks of the blessings received by “ground which has absorbed the rain that falls upon it and brings forth vegetation useful to those for whose sake it is cultivated” (6:7). But if it produces “thorns and thistles” (*ἀκάνθας καὶ τριβόλους*), he continues, it is destined to be burned (6:8).²⁹

In support of the view that Hermas is in fact appropriating Heb 6:4–6 and not simply reflecting a common tradition in *Mand.* 4.3.1, one may therefore cite over-arching similarities in terminology and in theological vantage point, distinctive linguistic echoes in particular passages, and the presence of parallel motifs from multiple passages in Hebrews in multiple passages in Hermas. That the author is wrestling with the same set of issues as Hebrews is evident, as is his awareness of the potential misapplications of the epistle’s hard sayings. If, for the sake of argument, one sees Hermas as attributing quasi-canonical status to Hebrews by virtue of the author’s allusion to this anonymous source and the angelic affirmation of its teaching on repentance, it would seem that the Shepherd’s immediate caveats about the controversial doctrine perhaps constitute an early challenge to the notion that scripture is its own interpreter (*sui ipsius interpretes*); in other words, any such qualification of the claims of a document already accepted as Scripture would reflect an implicit acknowledgement that Scripture must be interpreted within the context of a specific tradition. While there is little indication that Hermas regards Hebrews as an authoritative writing, the conscientious effort to navigate the pitfalls inherent in a text itself suggests an elevated regard for that text, with no apparent reference to its Pauline authorship. As prominent as Paul surely was, the example of Hermas

²⁸ Herm. *Vis.* 1.1.9; 3.9.5; *Sim.* 6.2.4; 9.20.4; 10.4.4. According to Hebrews, Esau seeks to repent but finds no opportunity (12:17). That there may not be a later opportunity for the audience to do so is suggested by Heb 6:3 (“This we will do, if God permits”).

²⁹ The use of the thorn-and-thistle metaphor, using the same Greek terms, occurs in Hermas (*Sim.* 6.2.6–7; 9.20.1–4) to make the same point about the dangers of wealth for the potential penitent.

shows that textual interpretation in the second century should not be understood as a function of the disputes between the apostle's supporters and his opponents.

THE MARTYRDOM OF PETER

The *Quo vadis* scene in the *Martyrdom of Peter* provides the final extant instance of the reception of Heb 6:4–6 prior to the turn of the third century.³⁰ The *Martyrdom* consists of the final chapters of the *Acts of Peter*, which dates to the second half of the second century.³¹ This portion of the Acts circulated independently and has been preserved in Greek manuscripts as well as in later Latin translations.³²

In the latter half of the *Martyrdom of Peter*, Peter prevails in a public contest in Rome with Simon Magus and proceeds to anger various imperial officials because their wives and concubines have embraced chastity as a part of their newfound Christian faith. Peter reluctantly agrees to leave the city after hearing of the subsequent plot against his life. As he is exiting the city gate, Peter sees Jesus about to enter and asks, “Lord, where are you going?”³³ Jesus replies that he is going to Rome to be crucified. Peter asks, “Lord, are you being crucified again?” to which Jesus responds, “Yes, Peter, again I shall be crucified.” Peter comes to himself, witnesses Jesus ascend to heaven, and then returns to the city to meet his fate. The legend is likely an invention based in part on the narrative in the Fourth Gospel in which Jesus describes his impending death as a departure and Peter poses the question in John 13:36, “Lord, where are you going?” When Peter proclaims his intention to follow Jesus even if it means dying, the Johannine Jesus answers by predicting Peter’s denial (cf. John 16:5; 21:15–23).

³⁰ Many readers will be familiar with the *Quo vadis* scene because it provides the title for the 1951 “sword and sandal” blockbuster, which was in turn based on the enormously popular novel of the same name published by Henryk Sienkiewicz in 1895.

³¹ Robert F. Stoops, Jr., “Peter, Martyrdom of,” *ABD* 5:281. On the intertextual relationship between the *Acts of Peter* and the *Acts of Paul* in the *Quo vadis* narrative, see Christine M. Thomas, *The Acts of Peter, Gospel Literature, and the Ancient Novel: Rewriting the Past* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 37–39.

³² On the Greek and Latin versions, see J. K. Elliott, ed., *The Apocryphal New Testament* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1993), 390–93. Translations appearing here are taken from Elliot. Quotations from the Greek text are from R. A. Lipsius and M. Bonnet, *Acta Apostolorum Apocrypha* (3 vols.; Leipzig: H. Mendelssohn, 1891; repr., Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1959), 1:78–103.

³³ In Latin, “*Domine quo vadis?*”

One finds a connection to Hebrews in the peculiar motif of recrucifixion. Apostates, according to Heb 6:6, are guilty of recrucifying the son of God. While the claim that Hebrews may be familiar with the *Quo vadis* tradition via 1 Peter and that author's knowledge of the historical events underlying it is dubious, the reverse is quite plausible.³⁴ The author of the *Martyrdom*, where one first sees the legend set down in writing, is very likely familiar with Hebrews.

The echo of Heb 6:6 in the *Martyrdom* (*Acts Pet.* 35) has gone unnoticed in part because the commentary tradition has been primarily interested in discerning the original sense of the biblical text rather than in its later reception. In this case, commentators have in fact invoked the testimony of patristic writers because of the uncertain meaning of the NT hapax ἀνασταυροῦντας. Does the participle in Heb 6:6 mean simply "crucifying," or does it have the more specific sense of "crucifying again"? The prefix (ἀνα-) can indicate repetition, but it frequently means "up" rather than "again."³⁵ The Vulgate (*rursum crucifigentes*), several of the early versions, and a majority of the Greek fathers take it as "recrucifying." Many modern commentators concur with this reading, but many others take the participle in its simpler sense of "crucifying."³⁶

In spite of this frequent invocation of patristic evidence, however, commentators have overlooked the allusion to Heb 6:6 in the *Quo vadis* tradition extant in the *Martyrdom* because their focus—quite understandably—is on the meaning intended by the author of the biblical text. Perhaps the patristic exegetes as well as the author of the *Martyrdom* were wrong to read Heb 6:6 as containing the idea of "recrucifying," but that is nonetheless what they have done. Even such misunderstandings (if, indeed, they are misunderstandings) provide valuable historical testimonies to various attempts at understanding the original text. The peculiar motif of recrucifixion occurs nowhere else in the extant

³⁴ See George Edmundson, *The Church in Rome in the First Century* (London: Longmans, Green, 1913), 153, who argues for the priority of 1 Peter and the *Quo vadis* tradition.

³⁵ Harold W. Attridge, *The Epistle to the Hebrews* (Hermeneia; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1989), 171.

³⁶ Among those reading the participle as "crucifying" are Ceslaus Spicq, *L'Épître aux Hébreux* (2 vols.; Paris: Gabalda, 1952–53), 2:153; Koester, *Hebrews*, 315; and Luke Timothy Johnson, *Hebrews: A Commentary* (NTL; Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2006), 161. Reading it as "recrucifying" are J. Schneider, "σταυρός κτλ.," *TDNT* 7:584; William L. Lane, *Hebrews* (2 vols.; WBC 47A–B; Dallas: Word, 1991), 1:133, 142; and Alan C. Mitchell, *Hebrews* (SP 13; Collegeville, Minn.: Liturgical, 2007), 125.

literature produced before the *Acts of Peter*. Insofar as a number of authors writing after its appearance begin to construe the ambiguous participle in Hebrews as denoting a repeated act, there are grounds for believing that this exegetical trend beginning early in the third century derives in part from the popularity of the apocryphal story in which Peter encounters Jesus on the outskirts of Rome.³⁷

The link between Hebrews and the *Martyrdom of Peter* is conceptual rather than strictly verbal, but this link is not severed by the claim that ἀνασταυρώ always means simply “to crucify,” without any hint of repetition. It should come as no surprise at all that the verb never denotes recrucifying in non-biblical Greek. After all, when would there have been any need for a special term, in Greek or in any other language, for crucifying a person a second time? Are there any accounts of individuals who undergo crucifixion not just once, but twice or three times? No such accounts have survived, and it is highly improbable that anyone was ever fortunate enough to live through a crucifixion only to have the bad luck of getting crucified again. It would seem that techniques were sufficiently advanced to finish the job on the first attempt in most cases.³⁸

For these reasons, the construal of ἀνασταυροῦντας as “recrucifying” in Heb 6:6—which is based upon the syntactical parallelism with the phrase “to restore again” two verses earlier as well as upon the emphasis on the once-for-all efficacy of the atonement in Hebrews—establishes a theological point of contact with the *Quo vadis* legend. As is the case with the *Shepherd of Hermas*, an impressive set of parallel motifs and shared concerns lends further support to the hypothesis that the *Martyrdom* is appropriating Hebrews 6 rather than independently reflecting some common tradition.

First, and most generally, both writings envision a past experience or imminent danger of persecution. In the *Martyrdom*, Agrippa executes the apostle and Nero makes plans to destroy Peter’s followers. The recipients of the letter to the Hebrews have been subjected to public harassment, humiliation, and the looting of their possessions (10:32–34). Although their mistreatment at the hands of their oppressors has not

³⁷ See esp. Origen’s linkage of Heb 6:4–6 with the *Quo vadis* narrative (*Comm. Jo.* 20.89–92).

³⁸ Josephus relates that in a small village he once came upon three of his acquaintances being crucified (*Vita* 420–421). Titus permits Josephus to rescue them from their crosses. Two of the three die shortly thereafter, but one survives.

yet reached the point of bloodshed or torture (12:4; 13:3), it is possible that their leaders in Rome have met such a fate (13:7).

Second, both writings address the issues of apostasy and defection. In the *Martyrdom*, Peter feels pangs of guilt as he contemplates abandoning his flock in the city very likely because it would too closely resemble his denial of Christ years earlier. (This failure of nerve is mentioned at several points in the *Acts of Peter*.) “Shall we act like deserters?” he asks, expressing the idea that fear of persecution can lead believers to abandon their faith. Earlier in the *Acts*, prior to the *Martyrdom* proper, one sees in the contest with Simon Magus the concern that believers may defect to Christianity’s competitors because of the superior benefits they offer to their adherents.³⁹ Whether it is to avoid impending persecution or due to a desire to resume the practice of Jewish sacrificial rituals, those addressed by the author of Hebrews appear to be considering defection. One sees this most clearly in Hebrews 6, but the whole letter is riddled with warnings about the dangers of falling back rather than pressing on to the end (e.g., 2:4; 3:7–4:11; 5:11–14; 6:11–12; 10:19–39; 12:1–12). The author’s overarching rhetorical program, moreover, aims at demonstrating that the Christian way is “better,” that adherence to the new covenant offers more rewards to its members than any alternative.

A welter of other details found in the immediate literary setting of the *Quo vadis* scene provides additional points of contact between the two documents. After relating the story of his vision of Jesus to his fellow Christians, Peter is arrested and sentenced to die (*Acts Pet.* 36). Many of the apostle’s followers come to visit him in prison, precisely the kind of solidarity commended by Hebrews (10:34; 13:3). Some in the community remark, “We must be afraid lest the Lord destroy us also, should he die,” implying that, while they are less than eager to come to Peter’s public defense, they realize that their best interests are served by standing with their distressed co-religionists because they have more to fear from God than from the imperial authorities. As the author of Hebrews puts it, in warning his readers not to abandon

³⁹ Robert F. Stoops, Jr., “Peter, Acts of,” *ABD* 5:267, who remarks that the main concern of the *Acts* is “the restoration and maintenance of faith in the face of competition from other cults,” and observes that it shows a “great concern for the newly converted and the possibility of returning to the church after apostasy.” Cf. Thomas, *The Acts of Peter, Gospel Literature, and the Ancient Novel*, 38, who describes Peter as “the patron saint of those with wavering faith.”

their fellows in times of trouble, “It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God” (10:31).

Peter then tells the gathered faithful who “hope in Christ” that they should call to mind the signs and wonders performed by him and by Christ (as an expression of “the compassion of God”) for their sakes, and that they should wait on the Lord “till he comes and rewards every man according to his works.” These instructions appear as he explains his decision to embrace the death that comes as a result of his own faithful witness to Christ rather than to look for deliverance. Hebrews likewise warns the readers from drifting away in 2:1–2, for if disobedience under the old covenant “received a just penalty, how can [they] escape if [they] neglect so great a salvation?” This salvation “was declared at first through the Lord, and it was attested to us by those who heard him, while God added his testimony by signs and wonders and various miracles, and by gifts of the Holy Spirit, distributed according to his will” (Heb 2:3–4). In Heb 10:35–39, moreover, the author exhorts the audience to remain faithful in spite of persecution, for faith “brings a great reward.” In a little while, the author continues, “the one who is coming will come and not delay,” but they need not fear if they do not shrink back when danger arrives.⁴⁰

To borrow the phrase of Heb 13:13, Peter is the ideal disciple because he willingly “bears the reproach” endured by Jesus when he accepts his own cross. In the speech he delivers just before being nailed to the cross, he explicitly compares his own passion to that of Christ.⁴¹ While hanging upside down he instructs his own followers about the meaning of the cross of Christ. “For what else is Christ than the Word, the sound of God?” he asks. Peter goes on to explain: “The Word is this upright tree on which I am crucified; the sound, however, is the crossbeam, namely the nature of man; and the nail which holds the crossbeam to the upright in the middle is the conversion and repentance of man.”

⁴⁰ After these warnings, both texts provide reassurance to their readers in the same terms. As he is about to be nailed up on the cross, Peter warns his flock, “Keep your souls from everything which you can perceive with the senses, from all that seems to be, and is not truly real . . . and you shall perceive the facts about Christ and the whole mystery of your salvation” (*Acts Pet.* 37). Hebrews follows with its famous definition of faith in 11:1: “Faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.” Cf. Heb 11:3: “By faith we understand that the worlds were prepared by the word of God, so that what is seen was made from things that are not visible.”

⁴¹ See Attridge, *Hebrews*, 399, who describes Heb 13:13 as an “equivalent to the call to take up the cross.”

The parallel configuration of strikingly similar language, concepts, and concerns strongly suggests that the peculiar motif of recrucifixion comes to the author of the *Martyrdom of Peter* from Hebrews. As with *1 Clement* and *Hermas*, one sees Heb 6:4–6 informing Christian parlance—if not doctrinal debate—concerning penitential practice. The *Martyrdom* represents a narrative reconfiguration of early Christian teachings related to repentance and apostasy. Its author exercises considerable freedom in constructing the *Quo vadis* scene, yet the discernible theological substructure of the unfolding narrative, with its significant points of contact with Hebrews, demonstrates that the *Martyrdom* is more than just a Christian example of the romance literature it otherwise resembles. Finally, the author's appropriation of Heb 6:6 in tandem with the Johannine tag line from which the *Quo vadis* legend takes its name suggests that Hebrews contributes in some small degree to an emerging theological idiom well before the end of the second century.

CONCLUSION

The earliest reception of Heb 4:4–6 exhibits a range of interests and reading strategies that cannot always or only be categorized as literal, anagogical, tropological, or allegorical without misrepresenting the sources. In the analysis of pre-modern interpretation, one could argue that strict adherence to such categories as one finds in the medieval dictum summarizing the “fourfold sense of scripture” (*Littera gesta docet/ Quod credas allegoria/ Moralia quod agas/ Quo tendas anagogia*) is itself insufficiently critical. Patristic methods of interpretation are, if anything, eclectic, and thus “pre-systematic” is a more accurate (and less pejorative) descriptor than “pre-critical.”⁴² Many of these interpreters listen to the biblical text with ears keenly attuned to its syntactical and lexical nuances and aware of the differences that coincide with different audiences and settings in life. They are decidedly intensive readers.⁴³ Their resistance to the notion that the shaping of Christian practice and the discovery of a text's meaning constitute discrete hermeneutical enterprises furthermore underscores the consonance of their aims with those of the author of

⁴² Gerald Bray, *Biblical Interpretation: Past and Present* (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity, 1996), 97.

⁴³ On patristic exegesis as “intensive reading,” see John J. O’Keefe and R. R. Reno, *Sanctified Vision: An Introduction to Early Christian Interpretation of the Bible* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2005), 45–68.

Hebrews. These habits are most conspicuous with respect to Scripture, but the history of the interpretation of Heb 6:4–6 shows that early Christian writers had the capacity, and frequently the inclination, to read texts not (yet) deemed canonical in the same manner. Any number of factors facilitated the eventual acceptance of the various books into the Christian canon, not the least of which was a tendency to reward the close and sustained scrutiny of such diligent readers.

THE APOCALYPSE IN CODEX ALEXANDRINUS: ITS SINGULAR READINGS AND SCRIBAL HABITS¹

Juan Hernández Jr.

INTRODUCTION

John's Apocalypse is perhaps the most fascinating and mystifying of all New Testament texts. It is without peer in its ability to attract and to alienate readers. No other text clarifies or confounds as easily with a single pen-stroke. Its tortured textual history and difficult climb to canonical status are primary witnesses to this complicated state of affairs. Despite all this—or maybe even because of it—some of the most intriguing questions about the Apocalypse have yet to be answered. One that accords well with the current text-critical climate pertains to the issue of scribal activity. In particular, one may ask whether (and to what extent) scribes might have engaged in editorial activity *beyond* the improvement of the work's grammar and style. Such scribal corrections are well known throughout the ancient world. Andrew of Caesarea, for one, condemned those scribes who preferred the Attic style and syllogisms to the language of the Seer.²

That one might expect scribes to engage issues other than the linguistic variety is suggested by some of the early literature on the Apocalypse. Early writers uncover a cornucopia of interpretive concerns specific to the work. Apart from doubts raised over its authorship and apostolic status,³ critics impugn the Apocalypse for its millennial teaching,⁴ its

¹ Originally presented as a paper in the New Testament Textual Criticism Section at the annual meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature, Washington, D.C., 18 November 2006.

² In his commentary on the Apocalypse, this otherwise allegorical interpreter of Scripture offers a literal application of the words of Rev 22:18–19: “Dreadful is the curse upon those counterfeiters of the divine words, capable of depriving the arrogant of the good of the coming age, for their rashness is bold indeed. Therefore, to keep us from suffering, [John] warns us hearers, lest we add or take something away. But those who regard writing in the Attic style and the language of syllogisms more reliable and more dignified are rejected” (my translation). Cf. Josef Schmid, *Studien zur Geschichte des griechischen Apokalypse-Textes* (2 vols.; Munich: Zink, 1956), 1:262.

³ Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 3.39.6; 7.25.

⁴ Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 3.39.11–13.

Jewish character,⁵ its depiction of angels,⁶ and its putative historical inaccuracies.⁷ The work is further suspect for its association with rogue prophetic movements.⁸ Yet scribal activity is never mentioned in connection with such problems. Judging from the available sources, one gets the impression that the Apocalypse was either rejected or accepted; and if accepted, its hermeneutical challenges were handled through a variety of reading strategies. Tampering with its text, however, does not appear to be one of these.

Is this in fact the case? Could it be that the available sources simply do not report all that is to be known about the Apocalypse? What about the possibility that scribal activity reflects issues other than those recorded by the early church? In other words, might additional spade-work uncover historical data that could enrich our understanding of the Apocalypse?

One way to answer this question is to examine the primary sources afresh. It is necessary to move beyond Nestle-Aland's variants to a firsthand examination of singular readings within individual manuscripts. Such a move will make it possible to produce profiles of scribal copying habits tied to particular witnesses. These profiles could then be compared with one another for an assessment of their common and distinctive features. Not only will this prevent hasty generalizations about scribal activity, it will also uncover readings that have been largely hidden from public view.

METHOD, MANUSCRIPTS, SCRIBES

A small step in this direction is to begin with the two earliest, full-length manuscripts containing the Apocalypse: the fifth-century Codex Alexandrinus and the fourth-century Sinaiticus. Full-length majuscules are preferable to the early papyri since the latter survive only in fragments. Moreover, since the fourth and fifth centuries represent distinct historical periods, a comparison will make it possible to examine the possible imprint of contemporaneous concerns upon each text.

⁵ Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 7.24.1–5.

⁶ Epiphanius, *Pan.* 51.32.1, 7; 51.34.6–7.

⁷ Epiphanius, *Pan.* 48.33.1–4.

⁸ Epiphanius, *Pan.* 48.11.5–14.2.

In the present study, Codex Alexandrinus will garner most of the attention. The evidence from Sinaiticus will serve primarily as a foil. My analysis of their singular readings takes its methodological cues from E. C. Colwell's programmatic essay on the subject,⁹ coupled with J. R. Royse's 1981 dissertation on scribal habits.¹⁰ With Colwell and Royse I consider singular readings to be "created" readings, but I exclude any Greek singulars with versional support.¹¹

It is critical to recognize that we are dealing with two distinct manuscripts whose differences extend beyond the century that separates them. For example, while only one scribe copied the Apocalypse in Codex Alexandrinus,¹² two were involved in its transcription in Sinaiticus.¹³ Unlike Sinaiticus, moreover, Alexandrinus is relatively free of the many corrections and blemishes that deface the former. Finally, there remains the complicated issue of text-types. While for most of the NT, Alexandrinus is considered—at best—a later Byzantine witness, in the Apocalypse this codex is celebrated for its fidelity to the *Urtext*.¹⁴ On the other hand, Sinaiticus is considered no more than a secondary witness to the Apocalypse, due its mixed character and numerous scribal errors.¹⁵ The subsequent discovery of P⁴⁷ only served to confirm this judgment.¹⁶

⁹ E. C. Colwell, "Method in Evaluating Scribal Habits: A Study of P⁴⁵ P⁶⁶ P⁷⁵," in *Studies in Methodology in Textual Criticism of the New Testament* (NTTS 9; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1969), 106–24.

¹⁰ James R. Royse, "Scribal Habits in Early Greek New Testament Papyri" (Th.D. diss., Graduate Theological Union, 1981), now published as *Scribal Habits in Early Greek New Testament Papyri* (NTTSD 36; Leiden: Brill, 2007).

¹¹ Here I follow Epp's more "restrictive" policy of excluding singular readings with versional support when studying scribal habits. See Eldon Jay Epp, "Clarification of the Term 'Textual Variant'" in *Studies in the Theory and Method of New Testament Textual Criticism* (ed. Eldon Jay Epp and Gordon D. Fee; SD 45; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993), 60.

¹² H. J. M. Milne and T. C. Skeat, *Scribes and Correctors of the Codex Sinaiticus* (London: British Museum, 1938), 91–94.

¹³ Milne and Skeat, *Scribes and Correctors*, 18–21.

¹⁴ Johann Albrecht Bengel, *Gnomon of the New Testament* (3 vols.; 7th ed.; Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1877), 3:174–75; Frederick Henry Scrivener, *A Plain Introduction to the Criticism of the New Testament* (2nd ed.; Cambridge: Deighton, Bell, and Co., 1874), 424; Schmid, *Studien zur Geschichte des griechischen Apokalypse-Textes*, 2:147; B. F. Westcott and F. J. A. Hort, *The New Testament in the Original Greek: With Notes on Selected Readings* (2 vols.; New York: Harper & Brothers, 1882), 2:261.

¹⁵ Westcott and Hort, *The New Testament in the Original Greek*, 2:246–47.

¹⁶ Schmid, *Studien zur Geschichte des griechischen Apokalypse-Textes*, 2:12, 109–22, 146–51.

This means that scholars must qualify their claims about the singular readings. All of the singulars considered in this study are “created” readings, insofar as they are obvious departures from the *Urtext*. This does not mean, however, that the scribes created all of them. It is quite conceivable that a handful was already present in the exemplars of the scribes. In other words, the process of corruption could include Greek readings both created *and inherited* by the scribes. Either way, these readings reflect the scribal copying habits of these particular manuscripts insofar as they survive nowhere else.

One more qualification is in order. It is often claimed that in a handful of cases Alexandrinus alone preserves the original. Joël Delobel draws attention to the issue and even warns against uncritical acceptance of Colwell’s method.¹⁷ According to Delobel, the fact that Alexandrinus could claim up to sixty of its 210 singulars as original meant that Colwell’s assumption was wrong. Singular readings are not always “created” readings. Delobel, however, relies principally on Bernhard Weiss’s inflated figures for his argument, which presents its own methodological problems.¹⁸ Chief among these is the fact that the studies of Hoskier¹⁹ and Schmid have pared down significantly the number of singular readings in Weiss’s original tally. Accordingly, far fewer such readings have a credible claim to being “original.” Of the eighty-four singular readings I have identified in Codex Alexandrinus, only three appear to fit this bill.²⁰ These readings are therefore excluded from this study of scribal habits.

By my count the text of the Apocalypse contains eighty-one singular readings in Codex Alexandrinus. Of eighty-one singular readings, twenty-one (25.9%) are orthographic²¹ and nonsense²² singulars, leaving

¹⁷ J. Delobel, “Le texte de l’Apocalypse: Problèmes de méthode,” in *L’Apocalypse johannique et l’Apocalyptique dans le Nouveau Testament* (ed. J. Lambrecht; Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1979), 151–66.

¹⁸ Bernhard Weiss, *Die Johannes-Apokalypse: Textkritische Untersuchungen und Textherstellung* (TU 7.1; Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs, 1891), 90–91; cf. Juan Hernández Jr., *Scribal Habits and Theological Influences in the Apocalypse: The Singular Readings of Sinaiticus, Alexandrinus, and Ephraemi* (WUNT 2.218; Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 2006), 52–53, 96–131.

¹⁹ H. C. Hoskier, *Concerning the Text of the Apocalypse* (2 vols.; London: Bernard Quaritch, 1929).

²⁰ Hernández, *Scribal Habits and Theological Influences in the Apocalypse*, 124–25.

²¹ Orthographic variants are essentially misspellings. For a list of these in Alexandrinus, see Hernández, *Scribal Habits and Theological Influences in the Apocalypse*, 103–04.

²² According to Royse, nonsense singulars are “words unknown to grammar or lexicon, words that cannot be construed syntactically, or words that do not make sense in the context” (*Scribal Habits*, 90–91). For a list of these in Alexandrinus, see Hernández, *Scribal Habits and Theological Influences in the Apocalypse*, 104–106.

a total of sixty significant singulars. These readings take the form of additions, omissions, transpositions, various types of scribal harmonizing, and potential “theological” singulars.

ADDITIONS

Of the sixty significant singular readings, twelve (20%) are additions. The overwhelming majority of these (eleven) consist in the addition of only one word. The remaining singular is a two-word addition. The added words cut across a number of grammatical categories and stem from multiple factors. Seven appear to have been made by assimilation to the immediate context. While most of these appear to be careless, at least two of them solve obvious grammatical and contextual problems and most likely reflect deliberate attempts at improvement. In addition to these, we encounter an instance of scribal harmonizing to a passage outside of the Apocalypse, two more grammatical improvements that do not involve harmonizing, and a preposition that has apparently been misplaced. Despite the variety of factors behind the additions, all of them—deliberate or otherwise—appear to render good acceptable sense.²³

When we consider how many words are added to the text, we find that our twelve singular readings contribute an additional thirteen words to the Greek text of the Apocalypse. What this means is that on average, the scribe of Alexandrinus adds about 1.1 (1.08) words per singular reading. Compare this with Codex Sinaiticus, whose scribes add 1.7 (1.65) words per singular reading. While this may not appear to be a great difference, it certainly adds up over the course of a manuscript. Sinaiticus contains forty singular readings that can be classified as additions (more than three times the amount of Alexandrinus) and contributes a total of sixty additional words to the Greek text of the Apocalypse.²⁴

OMISSIONS

In Alexandrinus, seventeen (28.33%) of the sixty singular readings are omissions. Surprisingly, not only do scribal omissions outnumber

²³ Hernández, *Scribal Habits and Theological Influences in the Apocalypse*, 107–110.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 65–69.

additions in this manuscript, but also more than half (nine) consist in the omission of two or more words per singular. As with the additions, all of these omissions cut across a range of grammatical categories and are produced by a variety of factors. Seven of the seventeen omissions are clearly due to either homoeoarchton or homoeoteleuton, while nine appear to be inexplicable or arbitrary. Only one omission can be attributed to scribal harmonizing to the immediate context. When we consider how many words are lost, we find that our seventeen singular readings result in a loss of thirty-four words, which gives us a ratio of two words omitted per singular omission in Alexandrinus!²⁵

Not surprisingly, the scribe of Codex Alexandrinus omits far less than the scribes of Codex Sinaiticus. The latter contains forty-nine singular readings that are omissions, which exhibit a total loss of 116 words to the text. Thus the scribes of Codex Sinaiticus omit about 2.4 words per singular omission.²⁶

Several conclusions can be drawn from the data. First, the scribe of Codex Alexandrinus omitted with greater frequency than he added to the Greek text of the Apocalypse (17:12). Second, the scribe of Alexandrinus produced a shorter text, since there is a net loss of twenty-one words ($34-13=21$) in the manuscript. In other words, the scribe of Codex Alexandrinus not only omitted *much more often* than he added, but he also omitted *more of the text*, thus creating a shorter manuscript. The same can be said about the scribes of Codex Sinaiticus—except that there the text of the Apocalypse exhibits a net loss of 50 ($116-66=50$) words, an amount two and a half times greater than that of Alexandrinus.

Thinking more broadly, this also means that the *lectio brevior potior* text-critical canon *cannot* be indiscriminately applied to the text of the Apocalypse in either Alexandrinus or Sinaiticus.²⁷ The pioneering studies of Colwell and Royse on the early papyri demonstrated that the general tendency during the earliest period of textual transmission

²⁵ Ibid., 110–113.

²⁶ Ibid., 70–74.

²⁷ The argument that the “shorter” reading is preferable when choosing between two or more variants rests on the assumption that scribes tended to expand rather than shorten their texts. This argument, however, has undergone a vigorous reassessment over the past thirty years. See Eldon Jay Epp, “Issues in New Testament Textual Criticism: Moving from the Nineteenth to the Twenty-First Century” in *Rethinking New Testament Textual Criticism* (ed. David Alan Black; Grand Rapids: Baker, 2002), 26–30.

was to omit.²⁸ It is now clear, however, that the tendency to omit was *also* at work in a later period, at least in the case of the Apocalypse. The fact that similar patterns have emerged in two manuscripts that differ in age, scribes, correctors, as well as in the quantity and type of corrections is all the more compelling.

TRANSPOSITIONS

The scribal tendency to omit is often also a factor in transpositions. This is certainly the case in Codex Sinaiticus, where, of the twelve transpositions that occur, nine are clear instances of an initial omission—due to either homoeoarchton or homoeoteleuton—followed by a correction. In other words, the scribes became aware of their error before getting too far and inserted the omitted material in a new spot.²⁹

The same cannot be said of the scribe of Alexandrinus. Not only are there far fewer transpositions in Alexandrinus (three), only one of these appears to be a careless omission followed by a correction. The relative lack of transpositions in this manuscript indicates that the scribe of Alexandrinus was far more careful than the scribes of Sinaiticus.³⁰

HARMONIZING

Both Colwell and Royse found that “harmonizing” was an especially prevalent phenomenon in the early papyri and it appears that Codex Alexandrinus is no exception. There are a total of twenty-one (35%) instances of harmonizing among our singular readings. One (2.9%) of these is a harmonization to a remote parallel. Two (5.7%) are instances of harmonizing to usage. Eighteen (51.4%)—the overwhelming majority—are instances of harmonization to the immediate literary context.³¹

This is comparable to the scribal tendencies of Codex Sinaiticus, although here, again, we are dealing with a larger set of singular readings.

²⁸ Colwell, “Method in Evaluating Scribal Habits,” 106–24; Royse, *Scribal Habits*, 705–36.

²⁹ Hernández, *Scribal Habits and Theological Influences in the Apocalypse*, 75–76.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 114–15.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 115–120.

There are fifty-five (34.8%) instances of scribal harmonizations in Sinaiticus. Four (7.3%) are to remote parallels. Four (7.3%) are to usage. The remaining forty-seven (85.4%) are all harmonizations to the immediate literary context.³²

CHRIST IN THE APOCALYPSE

Turning to those singular readings that appear to reflect theological concerns, it is worth noting that the scribe of Codex Alexandrinus edits *none* of the same passages targeted by the scribes of Sinaiticus. A handful of singular readings in Sinaiticus make a Christological contribution to the reading of the text. These readings improve the image of Jesus in a substantial way and appear to be consonant with fourth century concerns over the nature of the Son. Such readings include Rev 3:14, where the scribes alter the universally attested title for Jesus as the “beginning of the *creation* of God” (κτίσεως τοῦ θεοῦ) to the “beginning of the *church* of God” (ἐκκλησίας τοῦ θεοῦ)—a move that eradicates any notion that Jesus might be on a par with the created order.³³ The singular reading in 3:16 also belongs in this category, where the scribes transform Jesus’ threat to vomit the Laodiceans out of his mouth (μέλλω σε ἐμέσαι ἐκ τοῦ στόματός μου), to the far less grotesque warning to *shut their mouths* (παῦσαι ἐκ τοῦ στόματός σου). Finally, the scribes of Sinaiticus alter the ending of the doxology in 5:13. A doxology that formerly ascribed: “blessing, honor, glory *and power*” (καὶ τὸ κράτος) to God and the Lamb, now offers them both: “blessing, honor, and glory *from the Almighty*” (παντοκράτορος). To be sure, there are other minor Christological changes reflected in Codex Sinaiticus, but these are among the most striking.

Codex Alexandrinus, on the other hand, offers no such changes in those particular verses. In fact, the scribe of Alexandrinus appears to have an altogether different set of Christological concerns. The most

³² Ibid., 76–82.

³³ The problem with the original wording of Rev 3:14, which may be deduced from the nature of the scribal change, coupled with our knowledge of known controversies in the fourth century, is that the title, ἡ ἀρχὴ τῆς κτίσεως τοῦ θεοῦ, appears to lend itself far too easily to an understanding of the Son as a “creature.” One only need observe how remarkably similar the formal features of Christ’s title in Rev 3:14 are to the description of Wisdom’s origin in Prov 8:22—one of the key Christological texts at the center of the “Arian” controversy.

overt Christological singular occurs in 1:17, where the scribe transforms Christ's title from the "First" (πρῶτος) to the "Firstborn" (πρωτότοκος). The change itself appears to be a harmonization to Rev 1:5, where the title "Firstborn" already occurs. That the scribe strove for some consistency in this regard is obvious from the fact that he makes an identical change in 2:8 (although there we are not dealing with a singular reading). Perhaps these variants reflect a growing tendency to identify Christ as the "Firstborn" in the fifth century.

It should nonetheless be noted that the changes in 1:17 and 2:8 are shortsighted from a stylistic point of view. These readings rupture the perfect balance of Christ's original title, "the First and the Last" (ὁ πρῶτος καὶ ὁ ἔσχατος), by replacing it with the incongruous "the *First-born* and the Last." Moreover, it appears that the scribe was not entirely successful in his revisions. He misses an important opportunity to make an identical change in 22:13, where the pair ὁ πρῶτος καὶ ὁ ἔσχατος occurs once again. Given the fact that scribal attention tended to wane by the end of a manuscript, the oversight is quite understandable.

As with Sinaiticus, there are a few more singulars in Alexandrinus that can be classified as Christological, but these are the most explicit. One thing appears to be clear however: fourth-century concerns over the creaturely status of Christ were no longer pressing in the fifth century.

ANGELS IN THE APOCALYPSE

Surprisingly, the one area where the scribes of Sinaiticus and Alexandrinus appear to be in agreement is in their concern over angelic violence. In Rev 9:15 the scribes of both manuscripts create singular readings that either eradicate or mitigate a mandate—given to angels—to kill. The broader context of the Apocalypse offers potential clues as to why the redaction might have been necessary.

Throughout the Apocalypse angels are intermediaries of divine judgment. Their roles, however, are not direct. They make proclamations, offer incense, blow trumpets, wield sickles, and pour out bowls. With the exception of Rev 9:15, they do not *do* the killing. This verse, however, is uncomfortably explicit. It declares that the angels were unleashed "in order that they *should kill*" (ἵνα ἀποκτείνωσιν). The scribes of Codex Sinaiticus, however, insert the negative particle μή before the verb "kill," so that the verse now reads: "they were unleashed *without killing*"

(ἵνα μὴ ἀποκτείνωσιν). With this minor change, a third of humanity is spared the angelic onslaught.

Tischendorf deemed the insertion of the particle to be “per incuriam.”³⁴ While we part with Tischendorf only in the rarest of circumstances, one wonders whether the singular might not have been prompted by contextual considerations. In Rev 9:5, the locusts are instructed to torment *without killing* (ἵνα μὴ ἀποκτείνωσιν). In addition, 9:6 says that death will flee those who seek it. Perhaps the idea of God’s angels somehow now being commissioned to kill did not quite fit the immediate context. A deliberate scribal harmonization was probably in order.

What is striking, however, is that the scribe of Codex Alexandrinus also appears to have reservations about 9:15. Here the scribe changes ἐλύθησαν (“they were unleashed”) to ἐλυπήθησαν, creating the singular “they were *saddened* that they should have to kill.” In other words, according to the scribe of Codex Alexandrinus, the angels do not engage in such activity lightly; in fact, they are remorseful about it.

Similar to Tischendorf, Bernhard Weiss dismissed the singular as “a senseless spelling error.”³⁵ Indeed, one can readily see how ἐλύθησαν could easily be confused with ἐλυπήθησαν. And yet, nowhere else does the scribe of Alexandrinus make the same putative error. Every other occurrence of ἐλύθησαν is faithfully copied. Moreover, it is conspicuous that two manuscripts—separated by at least a century—would select the same verse for editing along similar lines.

That we are probably justified in suspecting an attempt to whitewash Rev 9:15 of its content is suggested by some early sources. Epiphanius, for one, argued that the angels of Rev 9:15 do not actually engage in killing. Rather, they *represent* and *lead* the nations that do. Reading Rev 9:15 in light of the Old Greek translation of Deut. 32:8, Epiphanius argued that God had assigned angels to represent the nations of the world.³⁶ Any allusion to angelic killing is simply a shorthand way of saying that God’s angels lead nations into war. They do not *do* the killing.³⁷

³⁴ Constantine von Tischendorf, *Novum Testamentum Graece* (3 vols.; 8th ed.; Leipzig, 1884–94), 2:957.

³⁵ Weiss, *Die Johannes-Apokalypse*, 49.

³⁶ The idea that angels represent nations is not found in the Masoretic Text of Deut 32:8. However, the OG translation reads: “the Most High apportioned the nations according to the number of angels of God” (κατὰ ἀριθμὸν ἀγγέλων θεοῦ).

³⁷ Epiphanius, *Pan.* 51.34.6–7.

Epiphanius's reading of Rev 9:15 appears to be based on an earlier exegetical tradition. Already in the third century, Hippolytus reads Rev 9:15 in light of Deuteronomy.³⁸ Here, Hippolytus defends the Apocalypse against the multiple criticisms of Gaius of Rome. In fact, one of the most astounding objections to the passage comes to us directly from Gaius himself. Without equivocation he states:

Non est scriptum angelos gessuros esse, nec tertiam partem hominem perturam esse. Sed 'Surgit gens contra gentem.'

It is not scriptural for angels to be engaging in war or for a third of humanity to perish. But 'nation will rise against nation.'³⁹

What is fascinating about Gaius's response is that he objects to Rev 9:15, not on account of its angelic violence, but on the grounds that it contradicts Matthew's eschatological narrative. Matthew 24:7 clearly states that in the last days nations will be engaging in war. Nothing is said about angelic involvement. For Gaius, Matthew's account was the canonical standard against which to measure rival eschatological narratives—and the Apocalypse was found to be "wanting" in this regard. This explains why Hippolytus (and Epiphanius after him) sought scriptural support in Deuteronomy for their understanding of the angels as "representatives" of the nations.

The scribes of Codex Alexandrinus and Sinaiticus do not go as far as Epiphanius or Hippolytus in their redactions of the verse. We are

³⁸ Victorinus of Petau (230–304 CE) makes an identical move in his comments on the four angels of Rev 7:1. He identifies them with the four angels at the Euphrates in 9:14–15 and claims, in light of Deut 32:8, that they are representatives of nations: "*Quattuor angelos per quattuor angulos terrae siue quattuor uentos trans Eufraten flumen: gentes sunt quattuor, quia omni genti a Deo deputatus est angelus, sicut lex dicit: Statuit eos per numerum angelorum Dei.*" See Victorin de Poetovio, *Sur l'Apocalypse suivi du Fragment Chronologique et de La Construction du Monde* (trans. M. Dulaey; SC; Paris: Cerf, 1997), 84.

³⁹ I. Sedlacek, ed., *Dionysius Bar Salibi: In Apocalypsim, Actus et Epistulas Catholicas* (CSCO 60; Louvain: L. Durbecq, 1954), 10 (my translation). This is one of five citations from a putative work by Hippolytus of Rome, who responds to Gaius's objections to the Apocalypse. The citations are found in the twelfth-century commentary by Dionysius bar Salibi and were originally published by John Gwynn, "Hippolytus and his 'Heads against Caius,'" *Herm* 6 (1888): 397–418. Whether or to what extent the account of an actual encounter between Hippolytus and Gaius is fictionalized is a matter of some debate. What is not to be missed, however, is that the concern over angelic depictions in Rev 9:15 is already evinced in Epiphanius and indirectly supported by the singular readings of Sinaiticus and Alexandrinus. Cf. Allen Brent, *Hippolytus and the Roman Church in the Third Century: Communities in Tension before the Emergence of a Monarch-Bishop* (Supplements to Vigiliae Christianae 31; Leiden: Brill, 1995), 144; Charles E. Hill, *The Johannine Corpus in the Early Church* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 172–204.

simply alerted to a potential problem with their editorializing. Nonetheless, it is striking how the singular reading of Sinaiticus—and to a lesser extent Alexandrinus—effectively rebuff objections like those of Gaius. To what extent Gaius's concerns were still circulating in the fourth and fifth centuries is, however, unknown. Epiphanius, at least, was aware of some of these in the fourth century and sought not only to refute them, but also to deride their proponents.

CONCLUSION

This survey represents the tip of the iceberg in editorial activity related to the text of the Apocalypse. The aforementioned singular readings merely highlight pervasive scribal concerns that have yet to be explored in all their fullness. If we pursue our inquiry of scribal activity a little further, we will discover that both manuscripts regularly alter passages dealing with angels. At times a scribe will simply clarify the role of an angel with a qualifying phrase (cf. A 9:11). On other occasions, their destructive activities are altogether deleted (cf. **8** 16:2, 3). Finally, we even encounter singulars that offer a christological reading, such as when the scribes of Sinaiticus transform the Strong Angel of Rev 10:1 into the Son of Man. The latter is particularly striking for the way in which it reflects contemporary interpretations of that passage. Victorinus of Petau, for one, declared that the Strong Angel was none other than “*Dominum Nostrum*”—our Lord.⁴⁰

Returning to the question raised at the outset—as to whether the scribes of the Apocalypse engaged issues other than the linguistic variety—the answer would appear to be yes. In addition, some of the singulars go so far as to mirror documented hermeneutical concerns. But perhaps what is most interesting about the scribal activity of these two manuscripts is the distinct copying patterns that emerge in each. Both manuscripts omitted far more than they added, and did so with greater frequency. Both altered passages that dealt with Christ and the angels. Yet, on all counts, the scribe of Alexandrinus was far more careful than the scribes of Sinaiticus and far less free to editorialize. Whether or not this reflects the supposed increased ecclesial control of

⁴⁰ J. Haussleiter, ed., *Victorini episcopi Petavionensis Opera* (CSEL 49; New York: Johnson Reprint, 1965), 88. Tyconius also understood the strong angel to be Christ. See William C. Weinrich, *Revelation* (ACCS 12; Downers Grove, Ill: InterVarsity, 2005), 146.

the fifth century is unclear. What is clear is that a priori suppositions about scribal activity can be misleading or even wrong. In fact, what is most refreshing about the Apocalypse is the way in which it continues to confound interpreters' most cherished assumptions.

APPENDIX

THE SINGULAR READINGS OF ALEXANDRINUS AND SINAITICUS

TOTAL NUMBER OF SINGULARS⁴¹

P ⁴⁷	= 76
Ⲡ	= 201
A	= 81

INSIGNIFICANT SINGULARS

Orthography

P ⁴⁷	= 18
Ⲡ	= 19
A	= 9

Nonsense Readings

P ⁴⁷	= 5
Ⲡ	= 24
A	= 12

SIGNIFICANT SINGULARS

Additions

P ⁴⁷	= 6
Ⲡ	= 40
A	= 12

Omissions

P ⁴⁷	= 15
Ⲡ	= 49
A	= 17

Transpositions

P ⁴⁷	= 2
Ⲡ	= 12
A	= 3

SIGNIFICANT SINGULARS: HARMONIZATIONS

Total Number of Harmonizations

P ⁴⁷	= 13
Ⲡ	= 55
A	= 21

Harmonization to Parallels

P ⁴⁷	= 0
Ⲡ	= 4
A	= 1

⁴¹ The figures for P⁴⁷ are taken from Roysce, *Scribal Habits in the Early Greek New Testament*. The figures for Ⲡ and A are taken from my *Scribal Habits and Theological Influences in the Apocalypse* (WUNT 2.218; Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 2006).

Harmonization to Context

P ⁴⁷	= 13
Ⲗ	= 47
A	= 18

Harmonization to Usage

P ⁴⁷	= 0
Ⲗ	= 4
A	= 2

CHRIST IN THE APOCALYPSE:
CODEX SINAITICUS

Jesus was not created.

Rev 3:14 ἡ ἀρχὴ τῆς κτίσεως τοῦ θεοῦ ϝ^c rell.
“The beginning of the creation of God.”

ἡ ἀρχὴ τῆς ἐκκλησίας τοῦ θεοῦ ϝ*
“The beginning of the *church* of God.”

Arius: “The one without beginning (i.e., God) established the Son
as *the beginning of all creatures.*”

Jesus does not possess base bodily functions.

Rev 3:16 μέλλω σε ἔμεσαι (ἐμιν ϝ^c) ἐκ τοῦ στόματός μου ϝ rell.
“I am about to vomit you out of my mouth.”

παυσε (*sic.* παῦσαι) τοῦ στόματός σου ϝ*
“*to stop your mouth*”

Both God and the Lamb are ascribed the blessing, honor and glory of the Almighty.

Rev 5:13 καὶ τὸ κράτος ϝ^c rell
“...and the power”

παντοκράτορος ϝ*
“...*of the almighty*”

Arius: “There exists a trinity in *unequal* glories...In their glories,
one is *more glorious* than another in infinite degree.”⁴²

CHRIST IN THE APOCALYPSE:
CODEX ALEXANDRINUS

Christ is not the First, but the Firstborn.

Rev 1:17 ὁ πρῶτος ϝ rell.
“the First”

⁴² Italics mine.

ὁ πρωτότοκος Α
“the Firstborn”

Rev 2:8 ὁ πρῶτος ζ rell.
“the First.”

ὁ πρωτότοκος Α 2034
“the Firstborn”

ANGELS IN THE APOCALYPSE: SINAITICUS AND ALEXANDRINUS

Singular readings that reflect sensitivity to angelic violence

Rev 9:15 ἐλύθησαν ἵνα ἀποκτείνωσιν ζ rell.
“They were unleashed in order that they should kill.”

ἐλύθησαν ἵνα μὴ ἀποκτείνωσιν ⲫ.
“They were unleashed in order that they not should kill.”

ἐλυπήθησαν ἵνα ἀποκτείνωσιν Α.
“They were saddened that they should have kill.”

Gaius: “Non est scriptum angelos bellum gessuros esse, nec tertiam partem hominem perituram esse. Sed ‘Surgit gens contra gentem.’

“It is not scriptural for angels to be waging war, or for a third part of humanity to perish, but ‘nation will rise against nation.’”

A singular reading that clarifies the role of the angel of the abyss

Rev 9:11 βασιλέα τὸν ἄγγελον ζ rell.
“king, the angel”

βασιλέα τὸν ἄρχοντα τὸν ἄγγελον Α.
“king, the angel who rules...”

A singular reading that transforms the Strong Angel into the Son of Man

Rev 10:1 ἡ ἵρις ἐπὶ τῆς κεφαλῆς αὐτοῦ ς rell.

“The rainbow on his head”

ἡ θρίξ ἐπὶ τῆς κεφαλῆς αὐτοῦ Ⲡ

“The *hair* on his head”

Cf. 1:14 ἡ δὲ κεφαλὴ αὐτοῦ καὶ αἱ τρίχες ς rell.

“And his head and his hairs...”

Singular readings that eradicate the destructive role of angels

Rev 16:2 καὶ ἀπῆλθεν ὁ πρῶτος καὶ ἐξέχεε(ν) τὴν φιάλην αὐτοῦ εἰς
(ἐπὶ A C 046. 051 1841. 2329 pc) τὴν γῆν **j** Ⲡ^{cc*} rell] omit Ⲡ*

And the first went out and poured his bowl on the earth [Omitted]

Rev 16:3a καὶ ὁ δεύτερος (add ἄγγελος ς 051. 2344 M vg^{cl} sy sa^{ms}
bo; Bea.) ἐχέξε ς P⁴⁷ Ⲡ^{cc*} A C P 1006. 1611. 1841. 1854.
2053^{txt}. 2062. 2329²² al lat] εἰς Ⲡ*

And the second angel poured [Omitted]

EXEGETICAL AND THEOLOGICAL PRESUPPOSITIONS IN NINETEENTH-CENTURY AMERICAN COMMENTARIES ON ACTS

Thomas H. Olbricht

The book of Acts is an area of Carl Holladay's expertise. He wrote the Acts commentary for the Harper Bible Commentary and is now at work on a major commentary on Acts in the Westminster John Knox Press series *The New Testament Library*.¹ I am delighted that this essay is included in his festschrift and honored that Carl is among my friends and distinguished former students.

Biblical studies in America came of age in American colleges and seminaries in the nineteenth century, but in regard to Acts detailed exegetical scholarship did not emerge until after the Civil War. Earlier biblical studies in America were fueled by doctrinal disputes among the Presbyterians, Congregationalists, and Unitarians and focused upon the letters of Paul. The major early scholars were Moses Stuart,² Charles Hodge,³ Albert Barnes,⁴ and Andrews Norton.⁵ Some initial interest in Acts was manifested before the Civil War. The first major American studies on Acts, however, awaited the 1920s work of F. J. Foakes-Jackson, Kirsopp Lake, H. J. Cadbury, and J. H. Ropes.⁶ In this essay I will examine seven nineteenth-century American Acts commentaries.

¹ Carl R. Holladay, "Acts" in *Harper's Bible Commentary* (ed. James L. Mays; San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1988), 1077–1118.

² John H. Giltner, *Moses Stuart: The Father of American Biblical Science in America* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1988).

³ Thomas H. Olbricht, "Charles Hodge as an American New Testament Interpreter," *Journal of Presbyterian History* 57 (1979): 117–33.

⁴ Thomas H. Olbricht, "Albert Barnes," in *Historical Handbook of Major Biblical Interpreters* (ed. Donald K. McKim; Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity, 1998), 281–85.

⁵ Brent Haywood, "Rational Piety: A Theological Biography of Andrews Norton" (A.B. Honors Thesis, Harvard University, 1977). On early American Biblical Studies, see Thomas H. Olbricht, "Alexander Campbell in the Context of American Biblical Studies, 1810–1874," *ResQ* 33:1 (1991): 13–28. For works on the history of biblical studies in North America, see: idem, "Histories of American Bible Scholarship," *CurBS* 7 (1999): 237–56.

⁶ F. J. Foakes-Jackson and Kirsopp Lake, eds., *The Acts of the Apostles*, edited by (5 vols.; London: Macmillan, 1920–33). On American biblical studies in the twentieth century,

AMERICAN NEW TESTAMENT STUDIES
IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

Early in the nineteenth century American Unitarians sparked initial interest in the accelerating German biblical criticism.⁷ Not too much later Congregationalists, Presbyterians, Methodists, and Baptists were attracted after several budding young scholars traveled to Germany to apprentice in the flourishing discipline, including Edward Robinson, Charles Hodge, and Ira Chase. Although Moses Stuart, one of the foremost proponents, did not travel to Europe, soon after his appointment to a professorship at the newly founded Andover Theological Seminary in 1810, he taught himself German and kept up with the publications in the field of biblical studies. Americans were mostly dedicated to the study of languages, philology, and history. By and large they rejected the more radical German positions. About the time of the commencement of the Civil War, the Unitarians lost interest in the German critics. The early advances in America were continued among the Trinitarians and it was they who made up the majority of the founding fathers of the Society of Biblical Literature in 1880.⁸ The appointment of Charles A. Briggs, who had attended lectures in Berlin, to a professorship at Union Theology Seminary in 1874 marked the beginning of a new era.⁹

see Thomas H. Olbricht, "Interpretation in North America in the Twentieth Century," in McKim, *Historical Handbook of Major Biblical Interpreters*, 541–57; and William Baird, *History of New Testament Research: From Jonathan Edwards to Rudolf Bultmann* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2003), 288–360. On Lake, see Thomas H. Olbricht, "Gerard Kirsopp Lake (1872–1946)," in *The Dictionary of British Classicists* (ed. Robert B. Todd; 3 vols.; Bristol: Thoemmes Continuum, 2004), 2:554–55.

⁷ Jerry Wayne Brown, *The Rise of Biblical Criticism in America, 1800–1870: The New England Scholars* (Middletown, Conn.: Wesleyan University Press, 1969). The focus is on the Unitarians, the exceptions being Moses Stuart of Andover and Edward Robinson of Union, Josiah Gibbs of Yale, and Horace Bushnell—all Congregationalists. Brown's study is limited to New England, a limitation that is justified on the grounds that "it was only in New England that critical biblical studies made considerable impact during the period" (8).

⁸ In fact, the students of Moses Stuart and Edward Robinson especially, but also those of Charles Hodge and James Waddel Alexander made up the majority of the founding fathers of the Society of Biblical Literature, launched in 1880; cf. Thomas H. Olbricht, "The Society of Biblical Literature: The Founding Fathers" (paper presented at the annual meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature, New Orleans, 1979); and Ernest W. Saunders, *Searching the Scriptures: A History of the Society of Biblical Literature, 1880–1980* (Chico, Calif.: Scholars Press, 1982).

⁹ Thomas H. Olbricht, "Intellectual Ferment and Instruction in the Scriptures:

The early American nineteenth century commentaries on Acts depended on British studies or translations of German works. British scholars were slow to embrace the insights of German and other continental scholars. According to J. H. Hayes and Jürgen Roloff, "As a rule, British scholarship adhered to the more traditional interpretation of Acts."¹⁰ A seventeenth-century continental scholar who influenced British studies was Hugo Grotius of the Netherlands with his *Annotationes in Novum Testamentum*.¹¹ Grotius gave special attention to philological and historical aspects of the text and employed Hellenistic classical materials to provide background for Acts.¹² Grotius exerted considerable influence on Henry Hammond, sometimes called the father of British biblical criticism.¹³ John Lightfoot of Cambridge published a commentary on Acts 1–12 that drew heavily upon Talmudic and Hellenistic texts. Some of the early English Deists, including John Toland and Thomas Morgan, argued that the early church lacked the harmony depicted by Acts and that Peter preached a conventional Jewish message over against the views of a Hellenized Paul.¹⁴ Peter Annet (1693–1769) a radical Deist, asserted that a number of discrepancies existed between Acts and the letters of Paul, though he believed that for the most part Acts reflected genuine history. Nathaniel Lardner (1684–1704), who was often quoted by the early American Acts commentators, responded to

The Bible in Higher Education," in *The Bible in American Education* (ed. David L. Barr and Nicholas Piediscalzi; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1982), 97–119. Other studies include R. J. Coggins and R. P. Martin, "American Interpretation," in *A Dictionary of Biblical Interpretation* (ed. R. J. Coggins and J. L. Houlden; London: SCM; Philadelphia: Trinity Press International, 1990), 16–19; Frederick Danker, *A Century of Greco-Roman Philology Featuring the American Philological Association and the Society of Biblical Literature* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1988); Gerald P. Fogarty, *American Catholic Biblical Scholarship: A History from the Early Republic to Vatican II* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1989); Robert T. Grant, "American New Testament Study, 1926–1956" *JBL* 87 (1968): 42–50; and Mark A. Noll, *Between Faith & Criticism: Evangelicals, Scholarship, and the Bible in America* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1986). On Briggs, see Thomas H. Olbricht, "Charles Augustus Briggs," in McKim, *Historical Handbook of Major Biblical Interpreters*, 294–98.

¹⁰ John H. Hayes and Jürgen Roloff, "Acts," *Dictionary of Biblical Interpretation* (ed. J. H. Hayes; 2 vols.; Nashville: Abingdon, 1999), 1:8.

¹¹ Hugo Grotius, *Annotationes in Novum Testamentum* (3 vols.; Paris: Sumptibus Authoris, ex prostant exemplaria apud viduam Gulielmi Pele, 1641–1650).

¹² W. Ward Gasque, *A History of the Interpretation of the Acts of the Apostles* (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1989), 12–13.

¹³ Hayes and Roloff, "Acts," 1:6.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*; Gasque, *A History of Interpretation*, 13–15.

the Deists by comparing the narrative sections of the New Testament to contemporary authors, for example, Josephus and Philo, concluding that these sections were consistent with what was known elsewhere.¹⁵

THE AMERICAN COMMENTATORS

The American commentators I consider here somewhat in chronological order are Albert Barnes (1798–1870),¹⁶ Alexander Campbell (1788–1866),¹⁷ Henry J. Ripley (1798–1875),¹⁸ Joseph Addison Alexander (1809–1860),¹⁹ H. B. Hackett (1808–1875),²⁰ Lyman Abbott (1835–1922),²¹ and J. W. McGarvey (1829–1911).²²

Albert Barnes (1798–1870)

Albert Barnes, along with Charles Hodge, was among the earliest nineteenth-century American Presbyterian Bible commentators. His commentary on Acts was first published in 1834.²³ Seventeenth-century American Puritans published commentaries with British presses, but the new commentary impulse in America occurred only after a lacuna of two hundred years. These nineteenth-century commentaries differed from the Puritan commentators who, under the influence of Ramus, systematically outlined the biblical materials and had sections on doctrines, applications, and uses.²⁴ In this regard the nineteenth-century commen-

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Albert Barnes, *Notes on the New Testament* (London: Blackie & Son, 1884–85; repr., Grand Rapids: Baker, 1996).

¹⁷ Alexander Campbell, *The Acts of the Apostles, Translated from the Greek, on the Basis of the Common English Version* (New York: Thomas Holman, 1858).

¹⁸ Henry J. Ripley, *The Acts of the Apostles: With notes, Chiefly Explanatory, Designed for Teachers in Sabbath Schools and Bible Classes, and as an Aid to Family Instruction* (Boston: Gould, Kendall and Lucker, 1843).

¹⁹ Joseph Addison Alexander, *The Acts of the Apostles* (2 vols.; New York: Charles Scribner's, 1858).

²⁰ Horatio B. Hackett, *Commentary on the Original Text of the Acts of the Apostles* (Andover, Mass.: Warren F. Dryer, 1879).

²¹ Lyman Abbot, *The Acts of the Apostles: With Notes, Comments, Maps, and Illustrations* (New York: A. S. Barnes, 1876).

²² John W. McGarvey *A Commentary on Acts of Apostles, with a Revised Version of the Text* (7th ed.; Lexington, Transylvania Printing, 1872).

²³ My citations are from Barnes, *Notes on the New Testament*.

²⁴ Thomas H. Olbricht, "John Cotton's *A Briefe Exposition with Practical Observations upon the Whole Book of Ecclesiastes*," in *Rhetoric, Religion, and the Roots of Identity in British Colonial America Vol. 1* (ed. James R. Andrews; East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 2007).

taries are much more like their twentieth-century counterparts. Barnes was one of the pioneers in this new wave.²⁵ Though a minister and not an academic, he made an effort to examine the available sources.²⁶ He tended to avoid the more radical views of Michaelis, Eichhorn, and De Wette, the latter translated by an American,²⁷ though he read of their views in the works of Hengstenberg and perhaps later in translation. Albert Barnes broke little new ground, but he raised perceptive questions of the sort with which scholars continue to struggle.

Barnes observes that Acts, written by Luke in 63 AD in Rome, is not so much about the apostles, but specifically “a record of the *doings* of Peter and Paul.”²⁸ He argues that the book contains a record of the promised operations of the Holy Spirit, the revivals of religion in the church, the organization of the church, the story of self-denying apostles and members, and the early triumph of Christianity.²⁹ Barnes frequently cites earlier commentators and authors, for example, Lightfoot, Mosheim, Hackett, Josephus, Basil the Great, and Gregory of Nyssa.³⁰ He does not observe, however, that Acts 1:8 has implications for the organization of the book, and his only explanation for the fact that in Acts 2 each person understood in their own language is that it was the work of the Holy Spirit. Barnes dwells little on the titles for Jesus. In commenting on “Lord” in Acts 2:36, he writes, “The word *lord* properly denotes *proprietor*, *master*, or *sovereign*. Here it means

²⁵ Albert Barnes (1798–1870) was born at Rome, New York, to Methodist parents. He entered an academy in Fairfield, Connecticut, to prepare for a career in law and graduated from Hamilton College in 1820. A conversion experience changed his life’s goal. He became a Presbyterian and determined to enter the ministry, enrolling at Princeton Theological Seminary in 1820 and graduating in 1824. Barnes’ first pastorate was at Morristown, New Jersey, where he remained until 1830, at which time he was called to be minister of First Presbyterian Church of Philadelphia. He remained with this church for forty years until his death in 1870.

²⁶ He wrote in the introduction to his Romans commentary: “The books from which I have derived most assistance are Walton’s Polyglott; the Critici Sacri; Pool’s Synopsis; Calment’s Dictionary; Virtrina; Rosenmüller; Calvin; Gesenius; Jerome; Bochart’s Hierozoicon; Taylor’s Heb. Con.; Lowth’s and Noyes’ Versions; Keith on the Prophecies; Newton on the Prophecies; Hengstenberg’s Christology; and the writings of oriental travellers to which I have had access. I have also derived considerable aid from the Biblical Repository, and from Prof. Bush’s Scripture Illustrations.” Cf. Albert Barnes, *Notes, Explanatory and Practical on the Epistle to the Romans* (9th ed.; New York: Harper & Brothers, 1852), vi.

²⁷ Wilhelm Martin Leberecht De Wette, *An Historico-Critical Introduction to Canonical Books of the New Testament* (trans. Frederick Frothingham; Boston: Crosby, Nichols, and Co., 1846).

²⁸ *Ibid.*, iii.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, iv–vii.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 5, 6, 24, 27.

clearly that God had exalted him to be the *king* so long expected.”³¹ He undertakes no discussion as to how early Christology and soteriology in the book of Acts differs from that located elsewhere in the New Testament. In comments upon Acts 2, Barnes is especially interested in supplying information about place names in regard to the nations. He spends more time reflecting on cognate English words than in explicating Greek usage.

In Acts 6 Barnes contends that the “Grecians” were Greek and ethnic Jews, not proselytes, and that the Hebrews were Jews who remained in Palestine. While Barnes agrees that the men selected might be designated “deacons,” he does not think that the number seven implied a command to the church to repeat this specific number in every case.³² He does not comment on the fact that all of those selected had Greek names. His common method of explication is to draw on other works from either the Old or New Testaments. On the work of the seven he refers to the Pastorals and other New Testament letters. Regarding Paul’s travel to Damascus he supplies information regarding the city from 2 Kings in the Old Testament through the crusades up until his own time.³³ In writing about the Ethiopian Eunuch he reports detailed information about the country citing Edward Robinson’s edition of Calmet’s Bible Dictionary.³⁴ The Eunuch, he declares, was a Jew, but possibly a proselyte. At the end of the commentary Barnes includes “Chronological Arrangement of the Acts of the Apostles” by a certain Dr. Townsend, who believed that Paul was released from a first imprisonment in Rome in 63 AD.

Barnes makes few observations on the rhetorical features of the speeches in Acts especially in regard to structure or style. He does not mention classical rhetoric at all or evince any interest in determining the genre of the speeches. This is typical of all the commentaries studied here. Most of his comments provide observations upon the backgrounds and details of the speeches, sometimes quoting classical works. He often comments upon Greek phrases in the text. At most he offers an overview of the speaker’s demeanor and his awareness of the

³¹ Ibid., 50.

³² Ibid., 111.

³³ Ibid., 153–154. He does not cite any sources for this information.

³⁴ Ibid., 145–147. On Calmet and other Bible dictionaries, see Thomas H. Olbricht, “Dictionaries and Encyclopedias,” in Hayes, *Dictionary of Biblical Interpretation*, 1:297–99.

views of those in the audience. His characterization of one discourse as “calm, grave, cool, argumentative” is representative: “Paul understood the character of his auditors, and did not commence his discourse by denouncing them, nor did he suppose that they would be convinced by mere dogmatical assertion. No happier instance can be found of cool, collected argumentation than is furnished in this discourse.”³⁵ Barnes believes that even in undergoing the temple ritual cleansing ceremony, Paul was consistent in respect to the law. After a lengthy discussion he concludes,

The sum of the whole matter is this, that when the observance of the Jewish ceremonial law was urged as necessary to justification and acceptance with God, Paul resisted it; when it was demanded that its observance should be observed by the Gentiles, he opposed it; in all other cases he made *no* opposition to it, and was ready himself to comply with it, and willing that others should also.³⁶

In a way it is surprising that Barnes’s view essentially represents a position occupied by E. P. Sanders and those influenced by him.³⁷

Though Barnes’s commentary in format, purpose, explication, and supporting evidence is much like comparable twenty-first century commentaries, the topics are different in many key respects. The same is characteristic of the other commentaries scrutinized in this study. First, there is little concern with the genre of Acts, whether history, theological history, biography, or epideictic rhetoric. Second, there is little interest in the unfolding of Christology and soteriology, or theology on a larger canvas for that matter. Third, there are few comments upon the authenticity and rhetorical nature of the speeches. Fourth, there is little interest in whether the intent of the author is to describe the unity of the early church or whether the work adequately tracks the conflicts of the Jewish and Hellenistic elements in the church. He assumed that the God-fearers were Gentiles to whom the Jewish lifestyle had an appeal but who had not become proselytes. Fifth, there is little in literary analysis of the document as a means of understanding the purpose and argument of the author regardless of how one perceives the historicity of the contents. Barnes, as well as most of the

³⁵ Ibid., 260.

³⁶ Ibid., 308–9.

³⁷ E. P. Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism: A Comparison of Patterns of Religion* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1977).

commentators of the century, assumed that what can be known about Paul from his letters is compatible with the accounts in Acts and gives minimal attention to any perceived discrepancies.

Alexander Campbell (1788–1866)

Alexander Campbell was born in Northern Ireland of Presbyterian parents and attended the University of Glasgow for a year. He immigrated to America in 1809 and in 1840 founded Bethany College in what is now West Virginia.³⁸ In 1828 he published a translation of the New Testament based on that of George Campbell, James MacKnight, and Philip Doddridge.³⁹ He was a leading scholar in the Disciples of Christ when he published a commentary on Acts in 1858.⁴⁰ In early years of publishing Campbell relied almost entirely on the English and Scottish sources with which he grew up. These, as well as later British works, continued to have great influence on his thinking for the rest of his life. He did, however, purchase most of the major German works

³⁸ Campbell studied theology under his father Thomas Campbell, a graduate of the University of Glasgow and the Anti-Burgher Seceder Seminary in Whitburn, Scotland. He was ordained by the Brush Run Pennsylvania church in 1812. That church became a part of the Redstone Baptist Association in 1813. He founded and edited *The Christian Baptist* from 1827 to 1830. In 1830 he founded the *Millennial Harbinger*, which he edited until his death. In the late 1820s Alexander Campbell and his associates started separating from the Baptists and took the name Disciples of Christ. In 1832 they commenced a merger with the Christian Churches, among whom Barton W. Stone was a chief leader. On Thomas and Alexander Campbell see Thomas H. Olbricht, "The Campbell Family" in *Encyclopedia of Protestantism* (ed. Hans J. Hillerbrand; 4 vols.; London: Routledge 2004), 1:343. On Alexander Campbell, see Leroy Garrett, "Alexander Campbell," *The Encyclopedia of the Stone-Campbell Movement* (ed. Douglas A. Foster et al.; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2004), 112–34.

³⁹ Alexander Campbell, *The Living Oracles: The Sacred Writings of the Apostles and Evangelists of Jesus Christ, Commonly Styled The New Testament*. Translated from the Original Greek by Doctors George Campbell, James MacKnight and Philip Doddridge with Prefaces, Various Emendations and An Appendix, by Alexander Campbell (Bethany, VA: A. Campbell, 1828) See Cecil K. Thomas, *Alexander Campbell and His New Version* (St. Louis: The Bethany Press, 1958) pp. 19, 147. The work of Campbell, MacKnight and Doddridge was published in London in 1818. Since Campbell revised the London translation according to his own understanding of the Greek text it became necessary for him to select a Greek text. For this purpose he preferred the work Johann Jakob Griesbach to that of others as he stated in the April 1827, *Christian Baptist* "I have greater reason to prefer Griesbach and other authorities to the common Greek, than any yet mentioned." Alexander Campbell, *Christian Baptist*, April 1827.

⁴⁰ Alexander Campbell, *The Acts of the Apostles, Translated from the Greek, on the Basis of the Common English Version* (New York: Thomas Holman, 1858).

translated into English, including J. D. Michaelis's *Introduction to the New Testament*, and cited German works that appeared in the publications of scholars who wrote in English.⁴¹

Technically speaking, Campbell's work on Acts is not a commentary. Commissioned by the American Bible Union (of Baptist origins), it was a translation with extensive notes.⁴² The Acts texts in the book are in three columns across (1) the King James Version, (2) The Greek Text (Griesbach) and (3) the Revised Version (Campbell's translation). The notes at the bottom in two columns comprise about half of the 190 pages. A Revised Version translated by Alexander Campbell is printed separately in two columns extending for thirty-one pages at the end of the work.

Campbell's observations are mostly on the Greek words of the text, but he also gives some attention to the larger features of Acts and the manner in which it has been interpreted. As to the purpose of Acts, he observes that some of the ancients called Acts "The Gospel of the Holy Spirit."⁴³ In keeping with his covenantal (dispensational) theology that was commonly accepted in America at that time, he identifies the day of Pentecost as the beginning of the Christian dispensation initiated by the Holy Spirit.⁴⁴ He does not, however, make observations on the structure of Acts (for example, concerning what insight 1:8 might offer).

An example of Campbell's typical translation comment is found in respect to the word λόγος, translated "treatise" in 1:1. He commenced his own translation, "The former Narrative," rather than the KJV's "The former treatise,"

The word λόγος in the com. ver. is represented by *treatise, account, communication, speech, utterance, words, tidings, preaching, and saying*. But only in this place *treatise*. Account or narrative seems much more apposite to Luke's Memoirs of Jesus Christ. He calls his gospel "a declaration" of the things concerning Christ. Crammer, the Geneva and Rheims, in their respective versions, give *treatise*, merely followed in the com. ver. Murdock's ver. of

⁴¹ J. D. Michaelis, *Introduction to the New Testament* (trans. Herbert Marsh from 4th German ed.; London: Livingston, 1823).

⁴² The American Bible Union was established in 1850; cf. David Ewert, "American Bible Union," in *Dictionary of Christianity in America* (ed. Daniel G. Reid et al.; Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1990), 43.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 4. It is of interest that five years later J. W. McGarvey, a student of Campbell, argues that Acts is a book of conversions. It is this view which pervades Stone-Campbell interpreters for the next hundred years.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 5.

the Syriac gives *book*; but this is no more pertinent. Wiclif gives *sermon*. Boothroyd gives *relation*, as also Granville Penn, Esq. The word *treatise* is appropriately followed by *upon*. Such a work Luke has not given us.⁴⁵

Campbell scrutinized most of the available authorities of the time in respect to his translations, including Barnes, Stuart, and Hackett.

I will therefore focus mostly on Campbell's translations of various Greek words. In regard to 1:2 Campbell changes the "Holy Ghost" of the KJV to "Holy Spirit." He observes that in the English of his time "ghost" meant the disembodied spirits of the dead. Campbell especially comments upon the Holy Spirit because he claims that much misunderstanding persisted among the American heirs of the great awakenings. He writes, "There are five distinct conceptions of the Holy Spirit in the *Holy Scriptures*. The first is his *nature*, all Divine; the second, his *person*, distinct from that of the Father and the Son; the third, his *office* of illuminator and sanctifier; the fourth, his *influence*; the fifth, his *work*, peculiarly developed in creation, providence, and redemption."⁴⁶

Campbell also sets forth a lengthy discussion of the word "baptism." He prefers "immersion" and translates Acts 1:5 "for John indeed immersed with water; but you shall be immersed in the Holy Spirit."⁴⁷ He observes, "Prof. Stuart, of Andover, affirms that all lexicographers and critics of note agree that βάπτω and βαπτίζω indicate to dip, plunge or immerse."⁴⁸ Campbell then lists from Stuart twenty-one ancient sources (for example, Lucian, Plutarch, and Strabo) and adds thirteen modern sources, such as Wall, Locke, and Samuel Clark, along with the Syriac and the Arabic Polyglott versions. Campbell consistently translates βαπτίζω as "immerse," and refers to John the Baptist as "John the Immerser." In respect to forgiveness preceding or following baptism Campbell writes,

As in one in any state cannot not enter into it, so he that is commanded to repent, or to reform, or to be baptized εἰς—for, in order to, or into any state, condition, or relation, cannot be supposed to be already in that state, condition, or relation, into which he is commanded to enter...Hence those immersed by Peter were immersed into Christ, into a relation, and into privileges not secured to them before.⁴⁹

⁴⁵ Campbell, *Acts of the Apostles*, 1.

⁴⁶ Ibid., 6.

⁴⁷ Ibid., 4, 5.

⁴⁸ Ibid., 3.

⁴⁹ Ibid., 17.

Regarding κοινωνία in 2:42 Campbell notes that the word occurs twenty times in the New Testament and is translated “fellowship” twelve times, “communion” four times, and “contribution,” “distribution,” “communication,” and “communicate” once each. In 2:42, however, he argues that it refers to a contribution of money: “The contribution of money for the wants of the brotherhood, appears to be its import in this passage as in Rom. 15:16. Paul desired Philemon to have *communion* with him in aid of Onesimus, a servant.”⁵⁰

In Acts 6 Campbell prefers “Hellenists” to “Greeks” in regard to the murmuring widows. He identifies those appointed as seven deacons.⁵¹ He does not comment on the Greek names of the appointees, however, nor on the apostolic wisdom exhibited in resolving the matter. Campbell also refrains from reflecting upon the propriety of Paul undergoing the sacrificial cleansing ceremony in Acts 21.⁵²

Campbell’s notations are well written and provide much information about the background of words in the ancient world as well as nineteenth-century usages. He cited many sources but not in full documentation. Various of Campbell’s suggestions improve upon the King James translation and twentieth-century translators often employ the same words as did Campbell.

Alexander Campbell was familiar with most of the biblical criticism of his time, but his insights into the perspectives of the more radical Germans are cursory. The Scriptures, especially in Acts and the epistles, play a major role in his vision for unifying believers in anticipation of the coming millennium.⁵³ The very role to which he assigns the Scriptures in these exciting developments prohibited the embracing of critical positions that undermined the documents as a constitution for the coming millennium. For Campbell, the Bible, especially the New Testament, was a reliable testimony to the acts of God through Christ. The miracles themselves were evidence that these actions and Scriptures were from God. The Scriptures need not be inspired throughout, or without textual uncertainties and inaccuracies. It is imperative, however, that they set forth a reliable testimony to God’s salvific action in Christ, and the constitutional guidelines for the ancient order.

⁵⁰ Ibid., 18.

⁵¹ Ibid., 39.

⁵² Ibid., 142–44.

⁵³ M. Eugene Boring, *Disciples and the Bible: A History of Disciples Biblical Interpretation in North America* (St. Louis: Chalice, 1997), 55–112.

Henry J. Ripley (1798–1875)

Henry Ripley taught at Newton Theological Seminary from 1826 to 1860.⁵⁴ He returned in 1866 as librarian and served until his death in 1875. He published commentaries on the four Gospels, Acts, Romans, and Hebrews. In the Acts commentary he sometimes reveals his Baptist profession, for example, in his comments upon baptism. Regarding the baptism of the Ethiopian eunuch in Acts 8, Ripley observes that the going down into the water implies considerable depth and therefore immersion.⁵⁵ He holds that baptism was the result of obedience and for the remission of sins, the latter not a common Baptist affirmation.⁵⁶

Ripley identifies as the purpose of Acts the “defending and promoting of the Christian Religion.”⁵⁷ He observes that the book is mostly about Peter and Paul, and that the last half focuses on Paul. Accordingly he divides the book into two parts, chapters 1–12 which cover from the beginnings after Christ to Paul, and then chapters 13–28 on Paul. He does not envision Acts 1:8 as proposing an outline for the book. The time covered in Acts is from AD 33 to 65 AD. He argues that Paul was released from prison in Rome, traveled to Spain and Britain, and returning to Rome was killed in 65–67 AD.⁵⁸ Luke is the author and supplied narratives of events at those times in which he himself was involved.⁵⁹ Ripley discovers in the depictions in Acts exemplars for the modern church in its life and work: “Though sufficient information is not given us on these points to gratify curiosity, yet enough is furnished to show us the primitive model, and thus to give us the pattern which we should endeavor to imitate.”⁶⁰

⁵⁴ *A Tribute to the Memory of Rev. Henry J. Ripley, D. D.* (ed. O. S. Stearns; Boston: Franklin Press/Rand, Avery and Co., 1875). Ripley was born in Boston and graduated from Harvard in 1816. In 1819 he completed his theological degree at Andover Theological Seminary. From 1821 to 1826 he served as a minister in Georgia. Newton Theological Seminary was founded in 1825 by the American Baptist Churches USA. Ripley was appointed a professor in 1826 and taught mostly courses on the New Testament and church history. Whether he ever studied in Germany is uncertain, but his colleague, Ira Chase (1793–1864) was at Halle and Göttingen in 1823–1824. Chase did not publish any commentaries; see William H. Allison, “Ira Chase,” in *Dictionary of American Biography* (22 vols.; New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1928–1958), 4:25–26.

⁵⁵ Ripley, *Acts of the Apostles*, 130.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 288.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 3.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 331–32.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 6.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 5.

Although much of the explication is that of Ripley himself, he seeks to bring to the interpretative task the insights of others: "The writer will perceive that I have sometimes enriched my pages not only with the sentiments, but also with the language, of other writers."⁶¹ He employs maps from Weiland's *Bible Atlas*, and the text from which he works is the American Bible Society Edition. He prints the chronological table from Calmet's *Dictionary*, as well as citing other details. He specifically mentions having looked at Hug, De Wette, Kuinoel, Lardner, and Robinson,⁶² as well as Bloomfield and Doddridge,⁶³ and sometimes refers to Josephus⁶⁴ and Philo.⁶⁵ In discussing Paul's sermon at the Areopagus Ripley compares his speech to those of Demosthenes and speeches in Thucydides' history. He assigns Paul's poem fragments to Aratus of Cilicia and Cleanthes, a Stoic philosopher.⁶⁶

Ripley discusses the events and Old Testament texts cited in Acts 2. He focuses upon Joel 2 for the background of the descent of the Spirit on the disciples and examines the other quotes in the light of their context. In regard to Acts 6 and the complaints of the Grecian widows Ripley specifies that these are either Greek-speaking Jews or those who became Christians who were born outside of Palestine.⁶⁷ He observes that it is a common conclusion that the seven appointed are the first Christian deacons, but he himself thinks it is not certain that their appointment launched the office. He makes no comment upon the names of all seven being Greek. He does think that the decision of the Apostles to give themselves to prayer and the proclamation of the word is a good example for contemporary ministers in the churches. He states that there were 480 synagogues in Jerusalem and that there was a Roman section of the city for Jews born elsewhere in the empire.⁶⁸ Ripley argues that Paul was consistent in Acts 21 in undertaking the Jewish cleansing ceremonies at the temple because he did not seek to prohibit Jewish Christians from keeping the law. He fully approves their being observant so as long as they were clear that their relationship

⁶¹ Ibid., 3.

⁶² Ibid., 332.

⁶³ Ibid., 129.

⁶⁴ Ibid., 20.

⁶⁵ Ibid., 99.

⁶⁶ He also incorporates a longer section of the hymn by Cleanthes as translated by Gilbert West (ibid., 235–40).

⁶⁷ Ibid., 96.

⁶⁸ Ibid., 99.

with God was through faith in Jesus Christ and not through the works of the law. Jewish Christians, of course, were not to impose their own compliance upon the Gentile Christians.⁶⁹

Ripley's commentary is helpful in regard to understanding the basics of the text. It is well written and easily searched. Most of his remarks focus upon the meaning of the words in Greek and English, and on several occasions upon the Old Testament and Hellenistic backgrounds. He comments on the many conflicts in which the early Christians found themselves, but offers essentially run-of-the-mill conclusions. He has little interest in Christology, be it the titles for Christ, his pre-existence, or his relationship with God. He manifests little concern for the overall structure of Acts or the various pericopes from the standpoint of classical history nor does he make observations based upon classical rhetorical structures.

Joseph Addison Alexander (1809–1860)

Charles Hodge was the first technically trained biblical scholar at Princeton Theological Seminary, but his interests soon turned to theology.⁷⁰ His groomed successor, Joseph Addison Alexander, was a son of the first professor at Princeton, Archibald Alexander.⁷¹ J. A. Alexander came in contact with the cutting edge German Old Testament critics

⁶⁹ Ibid., 280.

⁷⁰ Thomas H. Olbricht, "Charles Hodge as an American New Testament Interpreter," *Journal of Presbyterian History* 57 (1979): 117–33.

⁷¹ Joseph Addison Alexander (1809–1860) was born in Philadelphia. He received most of his early education from his father. He was especially adroit at languages, studying Latin as early as English, and at ten could read the Old Testament in Hebrew. He entered Princeton in 1824 and graduated in 1826 summa cum laude. The next two years he spent in private study, mainly of Near and Middle Eastern languages. In 1830 he was appointed adjunct professor of ancient languages and literature at Princeton. After a year of study and travel in Europe, he was appointed instructor in 1834 at Princeton Theological Seminary. In 1840 he was appointed professor of oriental and biblical literature. From 1851 to 1859 he held the chair of biblical and ecclesiastical history, and from 1859 to 1860, professor of Hellenistic and New Testament literature. See Henry Covington Alexander, *The Life of Joseph Addison Alexander* (2 vols.; New York: Scribner's, 1870); J. H. Moorhead, "Joseph Addison Alexander: Common Sense, Romanticism, and Biblical Criticism at Princeton," *Journal of Presbyterian History* 53 (1975): 51–66; Thomas H. Olbricht, "Joseph Addison Alexander," in Hayes, *Dictionary of Biblical Interpretation* 1:24–25, idem, "Isaiah at Princeton One Hundred Fifty Years Ago and Now: Joseph Addison Alexander (1809–1860) and J. J. M. Roberts (1939–)," in *David and Zion: Biblical Studies in Honor of J. J. M. Roberts* (ed. Bernard Batto and Kathryn Roberts; Winona Lake, Ill.: Eisenbaums, 2004), 387–403.

during a visit to Germany in 1833–1834.⁷² He shared the German love for languages and philology. He was already a person of thoroughness and rigor; but what he witnessed in Germany reinforced his prior habits. Alexander modeled German scholarship better than any American in the 1840s and 1850s. Theologically, however, he remained loyal to basic perspectives established by his father and perpetuated by Charles Hodge.

When Alexander arrived in Europe, he quickly made his way to Halle, no doubt on the counsel of Charles Hodge who had only recently returned from there. Alexander spent his time reading widely, especially in biblical scholarship, studying biblical languages, and visiting with German scholars. Among the professors he heard lecture were Tholuck on ethics, Galatians, and Psalms, Rodiger on Hebrew syntax, Fuch on Genesis, Pott on Sanskrit, and Wegschneider on 1 Corinthians and James. He read commentaries by De Wette, Rosenmüller, Klaus, and Ewald.⁷³ In January 1834 Alexander traveled to Berlin and came in contact with Biesenthal, Schleiermacher, Ritter, and Hengstenberg. Next he went to Tübingen where he heard Ewald lecture.⁷⁴

During the following decades Alexander wrote a three-volume commentary on Psalms (1850), two-volume commentaries on Isaiah (1846, 1847) and on Acts (1857), and single-volume commentaries on Mark (1858) and Matthew (published posthumously in 1861). Of these various works, according to John Eadie, “his crowning labour, his imperishable monument, is his Commentary on Isaiah.”⁷⁵ The Isaiah commentary was his most scholarly by intention. It was by far the most erudite American commentary at the time of its publication, as well as the most scholarly commentary on Isaiah by an English-speaking author.

While Alexander’s earlier Isaiah commentary was in the European mode, his Acts commentary by intention anticipated a different audience. In the introduction he announces that he writes for “common readers” and not for professionals.⁷⁶ He reveals that at first he set out

⁷² These include Charles Hodge, Edward Robinson, and Ira Chase; see Thomas H. Olbricht, “Alexander Campbell in the Context of American Biblical Studies, 1810–1874,” *ResQ* 33 (1991): 20–24.

⁷³ Alexander, *The Life of Joseph Addison Alexander*, 434.

⁷⁴ Mary Ann Taylor, *The Old Testament in the Old Princeton School (1812–1929)* (Lewiston, N.Y.: Mellen University Press, 1992), 95–97.

⁷⁵ Cf. Eadie’s preface to Joseph Addison Alexander, *The Prophecies of Isaiah Translated and Explained* (New York: Charles Scribner’s, 1870), v–vi.

⁷⁶ Alexander, *Acts of the Apostles*, i.

to cite and enter into dialogue with British and German commentators, much like in his Isaiah commentary. After completing the first chapter, however, he decided instead just to present the results of his research with minimal reference to the work of others. In the introduction he states that he especially utilized Baumgarten on apostolic history, Conybeare and Howson on Paul, and James Smith on shipwrecks.⁷⁷ While Alexander comments on both Greek and English meanings, no Greek words are printed in the two-volume commentary.

Alexander contends that Luke, Paul's traveling companion, authored Acts. He observes that Lucan authorship was never in dispute in the early centuries and that Acts is in all the known complete manuscripts of the New Testament.⁷⁸ He divides Acts into two parts, the first focused on Peter and the second on Paul. The focal point of Acts is the "planting and extension of the church." He proposes that 1:8 served as an outline for the total book: "The gradation in the last clause corresponds to the great periods of history recorded in the book before us."⁷⁹ Toward the end of volume two he writes that Acts is "a history of the planting and extension of the church among the Jews and Gentiles by the institution of great radiating centers at important points throughout the empire, beginning at Jerusalem and ending at Rome."⁸⁰

In regard to speaking in other tongues in Acts, Alexander conceives of the event as a reversing of the effect of Babel: "The moral unity of mankind was lost at Babel, [but] now restored by the preaching of the Gospel to all nations."⁸¹ He perceives tongues in Acts to represent the phenomenon as in the writing of Paul and declares that those speaking actually spoke in the *apropos* languages. He rejects the claim that the comprehension was what the listeners heard rather than what the apostles spoke: "Some have imagined the effect on the ears of the hearers but this is wrong."⁸² Most commentators now a century later, however, distinguish between what happened on the feast of Pentecost and in the ecstatic speech of 1 Cor 14.

⁷⁷ Ibid., xii. On James Smith, see Gasque, *A History of the Interpretation of the Acts of the Apostles*, 109–110. Smith, an experienced yachtsman, spent the winter of 1844–1845 at Malta and sailed the Mediterranean, establishing that the details reported in Acts on Paul's trip are accurate in detail and cannot be simply literary narrative.

⁷⁸ Alexander, *Acts of the Apostles*, ix–x.

⁷⁹ Ibid., 12.

⁸⁰ Ibid., 2:497. Other scholars focused upon the growth of the early church have more recently made the same observation (e.g., Roland Allen, *Missionary Methods: St. Paul's or Ours* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1962]).

⁸¹ Alexander, *Acts of the Apostles*, 45.

⁸² Ibid.

The comments of Alexander on Acts 2:38 focus mostly on repentance, which is the inward sign of the believer's decision. Baptism is the outer attestation of one's conversion. He along with some of the other commentators considered here does not comment on "for the forgiveness of sins."⁸³ He contends that baptism was the custom of the early church much like reclining at tables in order to eat (including at the Lord's table) and the mixing of water with wine. Since that was the case, the modern church may disregard it. He states that the phrase in Acts 2:39 ("For the promise is for you, for your children, and for all who are far away, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to him") may imply the baptism of children, but not necessarily.⁸⁴

The commentary on Acts by Alexander is well written and user-friendly for locating desired sections. Most of the amplification involves word meaning with suitable attention being directed to both Greek and English connotations. While Alexander makes several perceptive comments that others failed to make—and is the strongest of the seven commentaries in this regard—his observations are not always as nuanced as one might anticipate. For example, even though Baur had already made a distinction between Jewish and Hellenistic Christianities, Alexander essentially ignores the whole question. He bypasses Paul's participation in the temple cleansing ceremony in Acts 21 as a means of elaborating upon whether this action was consistent with Paul's claim that the believer's relationship with God is based upon faith in Jesus Christ and not through keeping the law of Moses.

Horatio B. Hackett (1808–1875)

H. B. Hackett became a professor at Newton Theological seminary in 1839.⁸⁵ Later in life he taught at Rochester Theological Seminary until his death in 1875. He was best known for his work on the *Smith Bible Dictionary*, writing thirty articles. He began an American edition of this dictionary in 1866; it was published between 1867 and 1870. Because

⁸³ Ibid., 86. He also fails to comment on the phrase in comments on 22:16 (cf. 2:302).

⁸⁴ Ibid., 86.

⁸⁵ Martha Mitchell, "Horatio B. Hackett," n.p. [cited 28 October 2007]. Online: www.brown.edu/Administration/News_Bureau/Databases/Encyclopedia/search.php?serial=H0010. Hackett was born in Salisbury, Massachusetts. He was educated at Phillips Academy, Amherst College, and Andover Theological Seminary 1834. From 1834 to 1835 he taught at Mount Hope College in Baltimore. He was at Brown University from 1835 to 1839 where he taught Latin, Greek, Hebrew, and New Testament. In 1852 he traveled to Palestine, and spent 1858–1859 in Athens.

of Hackett's training and travels one might expect a more scholarly commentary. Even though he cites German and British scholars, his commentary does not stand apart from the others examined here, nor is it substantially different from a scholarly perspective.

Hackett dedicated his commentary to Friedrich August Gottreu Tholuck of the University of Halle. It may be that Hackett traveled to Halle to meet Tholuck, who was the favorite European biblical scholar for many Americans of the nineteenth century. These included Edward Robinson, Charles Hodge, Joseph Addison Alexander, James Waddell Alexander, Robert Patton, John W. Nevin, Edwards Amasa Park, and Philip Schaff, who studied with Tholuck before he immigrated to America.⁸⁶ In the back of his commentary Hackett lists the scholars he has consulted. The scholars from England include Alford, Doddridge, Howson, Conybeare, Lightfoot, and Robinson. The German scholars listed are De Wette, Gesenius, Griesbach, Hengstenberg, Neander, Tholuck, Tischendorf, Wettstein, and Winer.⁸⁷ Hackett frequently prints words from the Greek text in the commentary.

Hackett argues that Luke was author of Acts because no other author was put forward by the early church fathers, and that the author of the Gospel and Acts is the same. The similarities, he argues, extend as well to the literary features of each document.⁸⁸ In addition he believes the details in Acts are consistent with what is known of the backgrounds and experiences of Luke. Despite the reservations of Schleiermacher, Bleek, and De Wette, he argues that the speeches in Acts are consistent with what is known of the thought and style of Peter and Paul. He contends that Theophilus was a "heathen" and that the purpose of Luke is to obtain from "heathens" a favorable hearing for Christianity. He believes that the work is history and that Luke has no other literary plan than to pursue the developments chronologically. He does not comment on the contribution of Acts 1:8 to the structure. Unlike the other authors considered here, Hackett concludes that Peter and Paul were martyred in Rome in 64 AD during the reign of Nero. He believes that Luke was a Gentile and cites Gregory Nazianzus for the tradition that Luke was martyred.

⁸⁶ Thomas H. Olbricht, "Friedrich August Gottreu Tholuck," McKim, *Historical Handbook of Biblical Interpreters*, 372–76.

⁸⁷ Hackett, *Acts*, 366.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 11–13.

Hackett provides detailed chronology, placing Paul's conversion in 36 AD, in Antioch in 44, at the Jerusalem conference in 50, his second missionary journey in 51–54, along with the writing of 1 and 2 Thessalonians, the writing of Galatians in 54–57, his incarceration in Jerusalem in 59, and the writing of 1 Timothy after 62 AD.⁸⁹ Hackett also gives considerable attention to geography.⁹⁰

Hackett contends that, when the apostles speak to the crowds in Acts 2, they actually spoke the distinctive languages of the nations from which the Jews came as listed in the text. The miracle was in what the apostles uttered, not in that what those who were present heard.⁹¹ He comments on Acts 2:38 but focuses mostly on repentance. He ignores the controversy regarding whether sins are forgiven prior to baptism or as the result of baptism.⁹² Regarding the seven appointed in Acts 7, he claims that no case can be made that they were deacons and thus provide models for future deacons in the church. He has no comments on the Greek names of those selected.⁹³ As might be expected and in contrast with most of the commentators discussed here, he provides substantial background materials from Hellenistic sources for Paul's stay and his speech in Athens.

Unlike the six other commentaries, when Hackett discusses Paul's sacrifices in Jerusalem as described in Acts 21 he reflects upon the dichotomy alleged by F. C. Baur between the Gentile Christianity of Paul and the Jewish Christianity of the Jerusalem Church. But Hackett contends that Paul's proceeding with the sacrifices is consistent with his claim that Jewish laws were appropriate for Jews, but should not be imposed upon Gentiles. Salvation for Paul was through faith in Jesus Christ and not through cultural codes, whether Jewish or Gentile. At the end of Acts (28:22) Hackett cites Baur to show that the claim of the Romans Jews not to know of Paul conflicts with Romans. Hackett suggests that whereas they may have heard of Paul, it is quite unlikely that news of Paul's current troubles had reached Rome. Because of the tenuous relations the Jews in the empire had with the Romans, they may have considered it best to get along with Paul. After all Paul

⁸⁹ Ibid., 22–23.

⁹⁰ Ibid., 43–45.

⁹¹ Ibid., 41, 42.

⁹² Ibid., 54.

⁹³ Ibid., 90.

was not in trouble with the Romans, who apparently had a favorable perception of him, but rather with Jews in the east.⁹⁴

Hackett proceeds in a scholarly manner in this commentary more than does his fellow Americans in that he prints Greek words and phrases and cites numerous authorities. His comments are mostly grammatico-historical. He makes few comments on the structure of the book or on the rhetorical features of the speeches. He obviously is aware of the German critical views but he does little to interact with them.

Lyman Abbott (1835–1922)

Lyman Abbott, the successor to Henry Ward Beecher at the famous Plymouth Church in Brooklyn, was a graduate of New York University but in regard to theology and Biblical studies was essentially self-trained.⁹⁵ Although he was well read even in German critical studies, these works did not influence his writing very much until after he had published his commentary on Acts. The Acts commentary was written in 1876 as a part of a projected complete commentary on the New Testament. Abbott only completed the commentaries through Romans.⁹⁶

Abbott perceives his commentary as an aid to “clergymen, Christian parents, Sunday-School teachers, Bible-women, lay-preachers . . . [which] aims to give the results rather than the processes of scholarship, the conclusions rather than the controversies of scholars.”⁹⁷ He employs, in his view, the best Greek text available and on occasion offers his own translations. He particularly highlights recent archaeological studies and includes numerous pictures and maps in the commentary. Abbott

⁹⁴ Ibid., 346–48.

⁹⁵ Abbott was born in Roxbury, Massachusetts. He graduated from New York University in 1853 and passed the bar exam in 1856. After a few years in law he studied theology under his uncle John Steven Cabot Abbott. He was ordained to the ministry of the Congregational Church in 1860 and served that denomination as minister in Terre Haute, Indiana from 1860 to 1865, when he became minister to the New England Church in New York. He resigned in 1869 to edit and write, serving as associate editor of *Harper's Magazine*. He was co-editor with Henry Ward Beecher of the *Church Union* from 1876 to 1881. From 1888 to 1898 he was Pastor of the Plymouth Church Brooklyn, succeeding Henry Ward Beecher. *Church Union* was renamed *The Outlook* in 1893 and Abbott served as its editor until his death. During World War I Abbott took a strong pro-war position.

⁹⁶ Ira V. Brown identified the Romans commentary (1888) as the time at which Abbott's writings began to show the effects of his reading in critical biblical literature (*Lyman Abbott, Christian Evolutionist: A Study in Religious Liberalism* [Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1953] 56–57).

⁹⁷ Abbott, *The Acts of the Apostles*, v.

argues that evidences in Luke and Acts lead him to conclude that they have the same author and that is Luke the traveling companion of Paul, though he also presents alternate conclusions.⁹⁸ He further contends that Acts reflects authentic first-century data and customs that in turn provide warrant for its authenticity. He dates the document to 63 AD. He grants that the Pauline authorship of Hebrews and the Petrine authorship of 2 Peter are questionable, but not the Lukan authorship of Acts. He finds no discrepancies between details in Acts and in the letters of Paul.⁹⁹ He concludes that the speeches in Acts were preserved as documents by the early churches, but that Luke, guided by the Holy Spirit, condensed them. They nevertheless retain the original content and style of the speaker.¹⁰⁰ As to the purpose of the work he concludes that Acts embodies the religion of Jesus Christ in action rather than being a description of the lives of the Apostles. He sees the organization of the book as essentially that set forth in Acts 1:8. He believes that Paul was released from prison in Rome in 63 AD, that he traveled to various cities (but definitely Ephesus), and was again imprisoned in Rome and martyred there in the persecution of Nero in 66 or 67.¹⁰¹

Unlike some of his American predecessors, Abbott often discusses the views of others. Regarding the chronology he mentions the work of Alford and Davidson.¹⁰² With respect to the tongues of fire in Acts 2, he cites both German and British scholars: Bengel, Olshausen, De Wette, Baumgarten, Robinson, Meyer, Alford, and Hackett, an American.¹⁰³ He also is more speculative. He believes that “tongues” are the same phenomena wherever mentioned in the New Testament and that only Greek was spoken on Pentecost, but in the different dialects of those present as made possible by the work of the Spirit. The speakers probably did not understand what they themselves said. The purpose of the phenomena was not teaching but to give thanks to God and may have served to declare the universality of the gospel. He rejected as rationalistic the interpretation that “the multitudes heard in various

⁹⁸ Ibid., 13.

⁹⁹ Ibid., 14.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., 15.

¹⁰¹ Ibid., 19–21

¹⁰² E.g., vol. 2 of Henry Alford, *The Greek Testament* (London: Livingstons, 1854); and Samuel Davidson, *An Introduction to the Study of the New Testament, Critical, Exegetical, and Theological* (3 vols.; London: F. Norgate, 1863).

¹⁰³ Abbott, *Acts of the Apostles*, 37.

languages what the believers spoke in their native tongue.”¹⁰⁴ He believed that each disciple who spoke did so in only one of the dialects while others spoke who addressed the crowds in an additional language.

With respect to the Greeks and Hebrews of Acts 6 Abbott declares that the Greeks were outsiders who lived a Grecian lifestyle, whether proselytes or ethnic Jews, and that the Hebrews were those who lived in Judea and spoke Hebrew so that the disturbance was a matter of geographical prejudice. He notes that all the seven had Greek names, suggesting that they were likely selected from among the persons whose widows were neglected, or that having a Hellenistic name, they would more likely render a fair judgment. He believes that the intent here is that these men, whether or not deacons, are only appointed to respond to an exigency. No definite office is thereby prescribed: “In short, the modern church cannot be conformed to the apostolic, because the apostolic church had no definite form. The constitution of the church was not framed by its founders like that of the United States; it grew like that of Great Britain.”¹⁰⁵ The model of the seven appointees for the modern church is not of a continuing office but should focus upon the manner in which the apostles addressed the problem at hand.

Abbott depicts Paul as not very observant of the law personally, even though he does not object to Christian Jews doing so as long as they affirm that their relationship with God is based upon faith in Jesus Christ and not upon the law. He argues that, left to his own devices, Paul would not have undergone the cleansing ceremony in Jerusalem as reported in Acts 21:20–28:

The commentators generally appear solicitous to show that Paul, in following this advice, did nothing inconsistent with his teaching. Perhaps not. Yet it appears to me very clear that he did from *policy* what he would not have done from preference, nor felt called upon to do by religious principle, and that the lesson which this incident intended to teach is this, that embittered prejudices are seldom overcome, and that the cause of truth is seldom advanced by *any* policy, however adroit, which involves any veiling or concealment of the truth.¹⁰⁶

Despite his lack of academic training Abbott is a surprisingly adroit commentator. His work as a trial lawyer, writer, and editor prepared him to write incisively and with clarity. He lays out his comments in

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., 37–38.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., 78.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid., 228.

an orderly fashion and is seldom ambiguous as to how he understands the text. He entertains more possibilities than most of these nineteenth-century American commentators. His approach is possible because he has examined the works of several other commentators and summed up and categorized their views. He does not often focus upon philological matters, but is nonetheless concerned with the meanings of words. He is more interested in the implications of the text for the offices and life of the church than most of the other commentators. Any effort on his part to enhance individual piety was miniscule.

John W. McGarvey (1829–1911)

J. W. McGarvey was an 1850 graduate of Bethany College, which had been founded by Alexander Campbell in 1840.¹⁰⁷ He served as a minister among the Disciples of Christ until the founding of the College of the Bible (now Lexington Theology Seminary) in 1865. Soon after the founding of the College he became the first professor of sacred history, in which position he remained until his death in 1911. McGarvey's most influential commentary was his volume on Acts.¹⁰⁸ This commentary exhibited his thorough examination of other Acts commentaries and additional works in English pertinent to Acts.

In his introduction McGarvey sets out the views of Barnes, Hackett, Alexander, and Bloomfield as to the purpose of Acts. These are each different and he argues that none really reflects the text. In his view,

Much the greater part of Acts may be resolved into a detailed history of cases of conversion, and of unsuccessful attempts at the conversion of sinners. If we extract from it all cases of this kind, with the facts and

¹⁰⁷ M. Eugene Boring, "John W. McGarvey," in Foster et al., *Encyclopedia of the Stone-Campbell Movement*, 506–7. McGarvey was born in Hopkinsville, Kentucky, but grew up in Tremont, Illinois. He entered Bethany College in 1847 and graduated with honors in 1850. He taught school and preached in Missouri until he was called to be minister for a Disciples church in Lexington. He became president of the College of the Bible in 1895. About his commentary on Acts, Boring writes: "His *Commentary on Acts* (1863, 1892) is unquestionably one of the most influential Biblical Commentaries in the Stone-Campbell tradition, both expressing and shaping the Movement's approach to Scripture." In the 1890s McGarvey commenced critiquing the developing critical tendencies in Biblical studies especially related to the Documentary Hypothesis and Near Eastern creation "myths," as well as progressive revelation and development within the New Testament. For discussion of McGarvey on Acts, see Boring, *Disciples and the Bible*, 248–50.

¹⁰⁸ John W. McGarvey, *A Commentary on Acts of Apostles, with a Revised Version of the Text*, (7th ed.; Lexington: Transylvania Printing, 1872).

incidents preparatory to each and immediately consequent upon it, we will have exhausted almost the entire contents of the narrative. All other matters are merely incidental.¹⁰⁹

It is surprising with the emphasis upon restoring the New Testament church among leaders of the Stone-Campbell movement that McGarvey placed the emphasis in Acts on individual conversions and disagreed with his teacher Alexander Campbell. At the same time, however, baptizing persons for the remission of sins was a major focus of the movement in the nineteenth century. McGarvey was certain that Luke, the traveling companion of Paul, is the author of Acts and that it was written either in late 63 or early 64, near the end of Paul's imprisonment in Rome. He divides Acts with chapters 1–12 focusing upon Peter and the church in Jerusalem, and chapters 13–28 on the activities of Paul. He considers 1:8 an important declaration for mapping out the fields of labor for the early believers, but not as a structural framework for the book.¹¹⁰

The greatest source of amplification for McGarvey is the citing of what to him are illuminating texts from other places in Scripture (mostly in the New Testament). He occasionally refers to the writings of other scholars, but not very often.

It is in Acts 2 that McGarvey most clearly elucidates a perception of conversion. After a lengthy discussion of the falling of the Holy Spirit, which he argued was limited to the twelve, McGarvey explicates Peter's sermon. He notes that it was not the appearance of the Holy Spirit in tongues of fire that elicited a response from the audience, but rather the contents of the words that Peter proclaimed.

It has already been observed, that up to the moment in which Peter arose to address the audience, although the immersion in the Holy Spirit had occurred, and its effects had been fully witnessed by the people, no change had taken place in their minds in reference to Jesus Christ, neither did they experience any emotion, except confusion and amazement at a phenomenon which they could not comprehend. This fact proves, conclusively, that there was no power in the miraculous manifestation of the Spirit, which they witnessed, in itself alone, to produce in them the desired change. All the power which belonged to this event must have come short of the desired effect, but for a medium distinct from itself, through which it reached the minds and hearts of the people. The medium was the *words* of Peter.¹¹¹

¹⁰⁹ Ibid., 3.

¹¹⁰ Ibid., 16.

¹¹¹ Ibid., 36–37.

The effect upon the audience was that they cried out, "What should we do?" (2:37). McGarvey gives slight attention to repentance, says that baptism was assumed by all, and believes that the only phrase in question is "for the remission of sins." He makes it clear that, despite many American Protestants to the contrary, the text in his view declared that the forgiveness occurred following baptism. In other words, they were baptized in order that their sins might be forgiven.

The dependence of the clause, "for the remission of sins," upon both the verbs *repent* and *be immersed*, being established, it would seem undeniable that remission of sins is the blessing in order to the enjoyment of which they were commanded to repent and be immersed. This is universally admitted so far as the term *repent* is concerned, but by many denied in reference to the command *be immersed*; hence the proposition that immersion is for the remission of sins is rejected by the Protestant sects in general. Assuming that remission of sins *precedes* immersion, and that, so far as adults are concerned, the only proper subjects for this ordinance are those whose sins are already pardoned, it is urged that *for* in this clause means "*on account of*" or "*because of*." Hence, Peter is understood to command, "Repent and be immersed *on account of* remission of sins *already enjoyed*."¹¹²

Acts 2:42 declares that those baptized "devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and prayers." McGarvey is aware of the claim of Campbell that fellowship in this case has in mind giving from one's means. He was no doubt aware of Alexander Campbell's claim that this is the meaning here, but though he admits that fellowship can mean contributing, he rejects that connotation in 2:48.¹¹³

Regarding the complaints about the neglect of the widows in Acts 6 McGarvey states,

The Hellenists were Jews of foreign birth and Greek education, and were so called because of their conformity to the manners of the *Hellenes*, as Greeks were called. Many of them were, perhaps, not permanent residents in Jerusalem, but had remained there after Pentecost on account of their interest in the new religion. They were the more likely to be neglected, because less familiarity [*sic*] known to the apostles and their assistants.¹¹⁴

¹¹² Ibid., 40.

¹¹³ Ibid., 47.

¹¹⁴ Ibid., 74.

McGarvey sees in the selection of the seven the arising of the office of deacon in the early church. He proposes that the methods, qualifications, and job description are an exact prototype for the appointment of deacons for all future times in the church. He elaborates by bringing up 1 Tim 3. He thinks it especially appropriate that all the appointees came from the Greek-speaking community: "It is a remarkable proof of the generosity of the Church at large, that all these are Greek names, indicating that they were selected from the very party whence the murmuring had proceeded."¹¹⁵

When McGarvey comments on Paul in Athens, he has the opportunity to bring in various classical materials to provide backgrounds and insight. But he does very little of this. Rather, he again employs other texts from the New Testament for amplification. In this case, however, he also draws from W. J. Conybeare and J. S. Howson's *The Life and Letters of Paul* (1852). He also cites the commentaries of Hermann Olshausen and S. T. Bloomfield.

Regarding Acts 21 and the offering of sacrifices, McGarvey separates matters of indifference from matters of truth. He holds that for Paul the offering of sacrifices at that specific time could be treated as a matter of indifference or opinion:

It is evident, from the transaction before us . . . that James and the brethren in Jerusalem regarded the offering of sacrifices as at least innocent; for they approved the course of the four Nazarites, and urged Paul to join with them in the service, though it required them to offer sacrifices, and even *sin-offerings*. They could not, indeed, very well avoid this opinion, since they admitted the continued authority of the Mosaic law. Though disagreeing with them as to the ground of their opinion, as in reference to the other customs, Paul evidently admitted the opinion itself, for he adopted their advice, and paid the expense of the sacrifices which the four Nazarites offered.¹¹⁶

McGarvey argues, however, that this indifference could not continue, but that early Christians must eventually conclude that it is wrong to offer sacrifices.

The truth is, that, up to this time, Paul had written nothing which directly conflicted with the service of the altar, and he did not yet understand the subject correctly. His mind, and those of all the brethren, were as yet in much the same condition on this subject that they were before the con-

¹¹⁵ Ibid., 75.

¹¹⁶ McGarvey, *A Commentary on Acts*, 258.

version of Cornelius, in reference to the reception of the uncircumcised into the Church. . . . Some years later, the whole question concerning the Aaronic priesthood and animal sacrifices was thrust more distinctly upon his mind, and the Holy Spirit made to him a more distinct revelation of the truth upon the subject, and caused him to develop it to the Churches, in Ephesians, Colossians, and especially in Hebrews. . . . After these developments, he could not, for any earthly consideration, have repeated the transaction with the Nazarites; for it would have been to insult the great High Priest over the house of God, by presenting, before a human priest, an offering which could not take away sin, and which would proclaim the insufficiency of the blood of the atonement. We conclude, therefore, that the procedure described in the text was inconsistent with the truth as finally developed by the apostles, but not with so much of it as was then understood by Paul. This conclusion presents but another proof that the Holy Spirit, in leading the apostles "into the truth," did so by a gradual development running through a series of years.¹¹⁷

It is interesting that, in this context, McGarvey introduces the idea that for Paul sacrificing is indifferent because now salvation is no longer through keeping the law but by faith in Jesus Christ. Rather, he develops a hermeneutical principle that by his death Christ first overcame the need for animal sacrifice. The early believers for a time were not condemned for sacrificing as long as it was their custom to do and not a matter of salvation. But he believed that ultimately the time would arrive when sacrificing was no longer a matter of indifference, but a practice contrary to the once-for-all sacrifice of Jesus Christ. McGarvey seems to imply that Paul eventually came to that conclusion through progressive or unfolding revelation.

CONCLUSION

American commentaries on Acts in the nineteenth century provide a valuable window into early critical biblical scholarship in the United States. The work of these early commentators illustrates on the one hand, how German scholarship found an audience in the United States and on the other, shows that the American clergy and academics felt that they had a contribution to make to this developing scholarly conversation. Perhaps because these Americans joined a scholarly conversation that was already underway, many of their methods are conventional,

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 259.

drawing on philological resources and comparative historical resources to “lead out” the meaning of Acts.

Yet there also are some distinctive characteristics, if not innovations, in their work. Of primary importance may be the simple fact of the reemergence of the commentary genre after a two century hiatus. In addition, many of these scholars read Acts in light of the circumstances of the developing American Protestant church movements, and did not simply parrot German concerns and contexts. The question of baptism (its relationship to repentance, whether infants or adults were baptized, the role of immersion), the nature and role of the Holy Spirit, church office, and the place of conversion were all theological and pastoral questions of immediate importance in establishing denominational identity in the United States, and these commentaries gave the educated clergy access to biblical resources previously mainly available in Europe. Contrary to an often oversimplified view of the place of Acts in early American biblical scholarship, the book was not read simply as a manual for church governance but was read with a nuance that attended to Acts’ own historical setting and to the diversity of interpretations that its text allowed.

NARRATIVE CRITICISM AND TRANSLATION: THE CASE OF LUKE-ACTS AND THE NRSV

Luke Timothy Johnson

As anyone who has tried it can attest, translation is a difficult, even a perilous art. Because of its central role in the worship and teaching of faith communities, the translation of the Bible is even more daunting, and seldom lacking in controversy. Augustine objected strenuously to Jerome's translation of the OT directly from the Hebrew,¹ and the King James Version was initiated because of the pitched ecclesiastical battles in England swirling around the Geneva and Bishop's Bible.²

The KJV, in fact, set a precedent for translations carried out by large committees of scholars, reducing the risk incurred by any single translator—learning a lesson, no doubt, from the experience of the great Tyndale.³ Still, even a translation carried out by committee (as was the NRSV),⁴ comes into the world naked, exposed to the gaze of benevolent and hostile eyes alike without the protective clothing provided by a commentary that can explain the thinking that went into every translation decision. I undertake my critical examination of the New Revised Standard Version translation of Luke-Acts, then, in a spirit of deep appreciation for the courage and integrity of those responsible for this important version, especially since my own efforts at translating portions

¹ See Augustine, *Letters* 28 and 71, and my discussion, "Augustine and the Demands of Charity," in *The Future of Catholic Biblical Scholarship*, with W. S. Kurz (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002), 108–10.

² The *Geneva Bible* was published in 1560 with an introduction by John Calvin, and with extensive notes of a thoroughly reformed (and decidedly anti-catholic) tendency: it consistently reduced priests to elders and church to congregation. It was also popular, going through 140 printings before 1640. Elizabeth I sponsored the *Bishops Bible* in 1568 precisely to counter such low-church tendencies. In 1604 King James I responded to a plea from bishops at the Hampton Court conference to authorize a new translation.

³ William Tyndale (1494–1536) left his imprint on all subsequent English translations (some 80 percent of the KJV comes from him). He was hounded by the agents of Henry VIII (then in his Catholic phase), arrested near Brussels in 1535, strangled, and burned at the stake. See D. Daniel, *The Bible in English: Its History and Influence* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003).

⁴ The NRSV copyright is dated 1989; according to B. M. Metzger, "The Story of the New RSV Bible," *RefLitM* 24 (1990): 171–76, the "time of publication" was May 1, 1990.

of the New Testament make me aware of the distance between exalted linguistic goals and lowly translation compromises.⁵

These reflections on narrative criticism and translation are offered in tribute to Professor Carl R. Holladay. We have been friends for thirty years and colleagues at Yale and Emory for almost twenty.⁶ It is a joy for me to share in the celebration of Professor Holladay's place and accomplishments in his chosen world of biblical scholarship. The topic seemed particularly appropriate for this occasion because Carl has himself expended great effort in text-critical and translation labors,⁷ because like me, he has struggled with the strengths and weaknesses of the NRSV since its first appearance,⁸ and because he is now, at the time of writing, working on a commentary on the Acts of the Apostles that will once more require the establishment of the text and an original translation.⁹ So important has Carl been to my own efforts along these lines that the most difficult aspect of writing the present essay is that I must do without his steady and wise consultation on the points I make.

THE NRSV AND ITS CRITICS

As explained by Bruce Metzger for the committee of translators in a preface addressed to the reader, this new translation of the entire Bible was authorized by the Policies Committee of the Revised Standard Version, which is a standing committee of the National Council of

⁵ See L. T. Johnson, *The Letter of James* (AB 37A; New York: Doubleday, 1995); *The Gospel of Luke* (SP 3; Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 1991); *The Acts of the Apostles* (SP 5; Collegeville: Liturgical, 1992); *The First and Second Letters to Timothy* (AB 35A; New York: Doubleday, 2001); *Hebrews: A Commentary* (NTL; Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 2006).

⁶ Carl was appointed to Yale Divinity School in 1975, and I joined him in 1976. We co-taught New Testament Introduction there for four years. Out of that experience, I wrote *The Writings of the New Testament: An Interpretation* (2nd rev. and enlarged ed. with Todd Penner; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1999), a book that owed a great deal to our joint efforts and lively conversations. Carl went to Emory in 1980, and on the basis of his teaching of NT introduction over many years at Candler School of Theology, wrote *A Critical Introduction to the New Testament: Interpreting the Message and Meaning of Jesus Christ* (Nashville: Abingdon, 2005). We have been colleagues at the Candler School of Theology and in the Emory Graduate Division of Religion since 1992, an association that has meant a great deal to me, and in which I have gained more than I have given.

⁷ See in particular C. R. Holladay, *Fragments from Hellenistic Jewish Authors*. 4 Volumes: Vol. 1, *Historians*; Vol. 2, *Poets*; Vol. 3, *Aristobulus*; Vol. 4, *Orphica* (Chico, Ca.; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1983–1989).

⁸ See C. R. Holladay, "Sorting out the NRSV Study Bibles," *ChrCent* 111 (April 6, 1994): 350–52.

⁹ Forthcoming, NTL.

Churches of Christ in the USA in 1974. It was not to be an entirely fresh start, but a revision that continued in the King James tradition, taking into account new knowledge concerning texts (especially in the OT) and language (both ancient and modern). The committee took as its maxim, “as literal as possible, as free as necessary.” The feature of the NRSV that has drawn most attention from fans and critics alike, was its effort to use gender-inclusive language with respect to humans (but not of God), but equally innovative was the elimination of archaic forms (thee, thou, thine, art, hast, hadst) in passages addressed to God. Although the distinction between “shall” and “will” is maintained in the OT, it is eliminated in the NT because of the “more colloquial nature of the koine Greek.”¹⁰

The first chair of the committee was Herbert G. May, but after his death in 1977, Bruce Metzger became chair, assisted by Robert C. Dentan and Walter Harrelson as vice chairpersons. Members came and went over the years, but at the time of publication, the 33 member committee had 10 scholars specializing in the NT and 23 specializing in the OT. There was one Jewish member and one from the Greek Orthodox Church. The remaining members were drawn from Roman Catholic (5), Episcopal (5) and a variety of Protestant traditions (17), as well as some identified only by academic positions (4). Although the committee remained overwhelmingly male, there were four female members by the time the committee finished its work.

The process followed by the committee was as follows: larger groups worked on sections of the OT, NT, and Apocrypha, and their revisions were then handed over to two editorial committees for each testament. Bruce Metzger and two others made up each of these editorial committees “for the necessary smoothing and standardizing of work that had extended over a span of fifteen years.” Then, “it was the responsibility of the chair to introduce at the very end a number of adjustments within, and between, the Old and New Testaments.” The process, as we shall see, may account for some of the problems in the translation; at the very least, it removed the final product from the review of the committee as a whole and gave enormous authority for “last minute changes” to the general editor.¹¹

¹⁰ B. M. Metzger, “Preface,” *The New Oxford Annotated Bible: New Revised Standard Version* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), ix–xiv.

¹¹ For a fuller description of the process, see Metzger, “The Story of the New RSV Bible” 171–72.

Because the NRSV was not a private venture but an official production of the National Council of Churches, and because it was immediately embraced by scholars and teachers as the improved version of the widely-accepted Revised Standard Version, it quickly achieved establishment status, appearing in study versions with notes by respected scholars,¹² in tools such as the Synopsis¹³ and Concordance,¹⁴ in the Common and Revised Common Lectionaries,¹⁵ and as one of the translations (with the NIV) used in the multi-volume commentary, *New Interpreter's Bible*.¹⁶ The National Conference of Catholic Bishops quickly granted the translation an *imprimatur* and authorized its use in Catholic editions of the Bible.¹⁷ This initiative was subsequently reversed by the Vatican because of the NRSV's use of inclusive language,¹⁸ but the same fate was suffered by the *New American Bible*, produced by the scholars of the Catholic Biblical Association of America.¹⁹

The effect of this publishing *putsch* was most evident in the world of theological education associated with the same denominations that sponsored the translation. Its explicit embrace by American scholars, not to mention the fact that its use in the common pedagogical

¹² For example, *The New Oxford Annotated Bible with the Apocrypha/Deuterocanonical Books* (ed. B. M. Metzger and R. E. Murphy; New York: Oxford University Press, 1991); *NRSV Harper Study Bible, Expanded and Updated* (ed. V. Verbrugge, with study helps by H. Lindsell; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1991); *The HarperCollins Study Bible: New Revised Standard Version with the Apocryphal/Deuterocanonical Books* (ed. W. A. Meeks; New York: HarperCollins, 1993); *Cambridge Annotated Study Bible* (with notes and references by H. C. Kee; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1993); *The New Interpreter's Study Bible: New Revised Standard Version with the Apocrypha* (Nashville: Abingdon, 2003).

¹³ B. H. Throckmorton, *Gospel Parallels: A Comparison of the Synoptic Gospels* (5th ed.; Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1992).

¹⁴ See R. E. Whitaker and J. R. Kohlenberger, *Analytical Concordance to the New Revised Standard Version of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000). So far as I can tell, no concordance on the entire Bible has appeared.

¹⁵ See *Revised Common Lectionary 1992 for the United Methodist Church* (Wichita: St. Paul's United Methodist Church, 1992); W. Brueggemann, C. B. Cousar, B. R. Gaventa, J. D. Newsome, *Texts for Preaching: A Lectionary Commentary Based on the NRSV* (3 vols.; Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 1995).

¹⁶ *The New Interpreter's Bible in Twelve Volumes* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1998).

¹⁷ See "Imprimatur Granted," *ChrCent* 108 (November 20–17, 1991): 1087.

¹⁸ See "Vatican Bans NRSV for Catholic Worship," *ChrCent* 111 (December 7, 1994): 1154.

¹⁹ The New American Bible (NAB) first appeared in 1970 and was amended to employ more inclusive language in 1991. The Vatican rejected it as the basis for the revised lectionary for the Roman Catholic Dioceses in the United States because of this inclusive language, then in 2000 the *1991 New American Bible with Psalms and Revised New Testament* was modified by a committee made up of members of the Vatican and American Bishops for use in the liturgy.

resources, meant that for most seminary students, the RSV was speedily displaced, and the NRSV was the version used in their study (and subsequent use) of the Bible. The translation won slower acceptance among Christian groups less strongly affiliated with the National Council of Churches,²⁰ and anecdotal publishing information suggests that the NRSV has proved to be more popular among academics than among ordinary Bible readers.²¹

In preparing for this essay, I read many earlier reviews of the NRSV, a discussion of which follows below. Four general impressions emerged from my reading of these reviews. First, the initial flurry of responses based on a superficial reading was succeeded only sporadically by later, substantive engagements. Second, the reviews tended to appear mostly in ecclesiastical journals rather than in specifically scholarly venues. Third, attention, both positive and negative, focused disproportionately on the issue of gender-inclusive language or the quality of the English diction, rather than on the question of how accurately the translation rendered the Hebrew or Greek originals. Fourth, the few reviews by independent biblical scholars that considered the translation in some detail tended to be more negative than those that provided only a superficial impression.

Almost concurrent with the actual publication of the translation a number of essays appeared by representatives of the sponsoring organization,²² by leading members of the translation committee: Bruce Metzger,²³ Walter Harrelson,²⁴ Robert C. Dentan²⁵ (all part of the group carrying out penultimate or final revisions), and by the committee's sole

²⁰ See "Bible Translation Awaits Acceptance," *ChrCent* 110 (February 17, 1993): 168–69.

²¹ The interested reader can survey the current sales data for Bibles as compiled on Amazon.com for one snapshot of sales trends.

²² See "The Long Road to the NRSV," by J. Martin Bailey, Acting Associate General Secretary for Communications of the NCCC USA, in *Religion and Public Education* 17 (Winter 1990): 45–50; and "The NRSV—Why Now?" by A. O. Van Eck, Associate General Secretary for Education and Ministry, NCCC, in *RelEd* 85 (Spring 1990): 163–72.

²³ B. M. Metzger, "The Story of the New RSV Bible," 171–76; idem, "The Processes and Struggles Involved in Making a New Translation of the Bible," *RelEd* 85 (Spring 1990): 174–84.

²⁴ W. Harrelson, "Recent Discoveries and Bible Translation," *RelEd* 85 (Spring 1990): 186–200; idem, "Inclusive Language in the New Revised Standard Version," *PSB* n.s. 11/3 (1990): 224–31.

²⁵ R. C. Dentan, "The Story of the New Revised Standard Version," *PSB* n.s. 11/3 (1990): 211–23.

Jewish member, Harry Orlinsky.²⁶ Metzger most clearly gives expression to the overall process and goals; Dentan provides historical context and is candid about the committee's shifting perceptions as well as the role of "common-sense" in many translation decisions. Harrelson is particularly helpful in communicating the impact of new textual knowledge on the translation, and on the growing awareness of the inclusive-language problem, as well as acknowledging, "The NRSV has flaws." Harrelson also well states the committee's conviction concerning its work:

No doubt there are mistakes, instances of lack of consistency, infelicities of expression, and perhaps some howlers. But on the basis of my examination of considerable portions of the text I would judge that it is by far our most inclusive Bible, the one best suited for public reading among all the newer translations, and (as will be indicated elsewhere in this issue) our most accurate available English Bible.²⁷

A number of positive reviews appeared shortly after publication of the new translation. Some of these are less critical reviews than they are essays that applaud the new version for its goals and process, and use it as an opportunity to talk about translation in general, or suggest topics for discussion and instruction.²⁸ Others praise the translation for its aesthetic qualities²⁹ or for its suitability for public reading.³⁰ Two positive reviews that focus on gender-inclusive language compare the NRSV to the *Revised English Bible*, published in the same year by British scholars. New Testament scholar B. H. Throckmorton applauds the NRSV's moves toward inclusivity,³¹ while OT scholar Carole R. Fontaine is appreciative of the NRSV but more reserved in her approval: it

²⁶ H. M. Orlinsky, "A Jewish Scholar Looks at the Revised Standard Version and Its New Edition," *RelEd* 85 (Spring 1990): 211–21.

²⁷ Harrelson, "Inclusive Language in the NRSV," 231. The ordering of the positive points is noteworthy.

²⁸ K. R. Krim, "Translating the Bible: An Unending Task," *RelEd* 85 (Spring 1990): 201–10; M. Boys, "Educational Tasks Old and New for an Ancient yet Timely Text," *RelEd* 85 (Spring 1990): 227–39; H. S. Olson, "The Word in Quest of Words," *CurTM* 18 (1991): 338–44; A. D. Bennett, "The NRSV: A Teaching Guide," *RelEd* 85 (Spring 1990): 255–78.

²⁹ J. Jenkins, "The NRSV: The Church's Bible?" *Lutheran Forum* 27 (November 1993): 50–51; T. A. Reiner, "The NRSV: Beauty and the Beast," *WW* 16 (1996): 366, 368.

³⁰ R. G. Bratcher, "Translating for the Reader," *ThTo* 47 (1990): 290–98; J. V. Brownson, "Selecting a Translation of the Bible for Public Reading," *RefLitM* 24 (1990): 191–94.

³¹ B. H. Throckmorton, "The NRSV and the REB: A New Testament Critique," *ThTo* 47 (1990) 281–289.

does not go far enough.³² Herbert G. Grether compares the NRSV to three other recent English translations (all of which profess inclusivity as a goal) and finds that it is more consistent than the others.³³ By far the most positive scholarly review was by Walter Wink, who declared himself “astonished by the almost unerring precision of not just some but virtually all its changes,” states that the NRSV is a “quantum leap forward,” and a “stunning achievement.” As for the issue of inclusive language, Wink’s main complaint is that the committee did not go far enough.³⁴

A positive but carefully nuanced review was offered by D. A. Carson, who found some items to criticize—inconsistency in the use of “Messiah” and “Christ,” for example, and the failure to explain why the NRSV sometimes places in the text readings that appeared as alternatives in the RSV’s notes—but finds that, “by any reckoning, the NRSV is fresh, powerful, interesting, and usually right.”³⁵ In similar fashion, Roman Catholic NT scholar John Donahue concludes that “in terms of accuracy, recapturing not only the meaning but the tone of the biblical texts, and ease of reading, the NRSV may be the best English version available.” Donahue does identify a key passage in which the goal of inclusive-language threatens the integrity of the scriptural metaphor (Galatians 4:4–7), and he reaches a conclusion that others have as well, “although judging that the NRSV may be the best English translation available, I think that the Old Testament is better translated than the New.” He considers that, inclusive language aside, the revised version of the NAB (1986) “has a slight edge in the New Testament, both for accuracy and English expression.”³⁶

A second set of early reviews more evenly balanced positive and negative aspects of the NRSV. For example, a short review appearing at the relatively late date of 1996 complained that the translation tried to be “all things to all people,” and was hampered by excessive

³² C. R. Fontaine, “The NRSV and the REB: A Feminist Critique,” *ThTo* 47 (1990) 273–280.

³³ H. G. Grether, “Translators and the Gender Gap,” *ThTo* 47 (1990) 299–305.

³⁴ W. Wink, “The New RSV: The Best Translation, Halfway There,” *ChrCent* 107 (September 1990): 829–33.

³⁵ D. A. Carson, “A Review of the New Revised Standard Version,” *RTR* 1 (January–April 1991): 1–11.

³⁶ J. Donahue, “Adjusting the Standard: A First Look at the NRSV,” *Ecumenical Trends* 19/10 (November 1990): 145–50.

dependence on the Tyndale tradition.³⁷ In another study, the Bible Division at Trinity Lutheran Seminary gave a thorough review to the distinct parts of the NRSV and also reached mixed conclusions. In the OT, the reviewers found counterbalancing positive and negative aspects. The scholars reviewing the NT, however, found more to challenge than to praise. A consistent worry was with accuracy. As Mark Powell comments, "Now we realize why the NRSV reads so well. The scholars who prepared this version apparently viewed themselves not only as translators but also as copy-editors. The essay concludes that the version is an improvement over the RSV, but also that "the overall product, however, is uneven and suffers from being too close to the RSV in many instances and too far from the Greek in even more cases."³⁸ The final essay in this mixed-review category is by J. J. M. Roberts, a member of the NRSV translation committee, who states candidly, "The NRSV is a very good translation in some places, but it is *also* a very poor translation in some ways in some places." He worries about the "nimbus of piety and respect" surrounding the translation process, and seeks to show the human dimension of the committee's work. Specifically, he attributes the deficiencies of the NRSV to "the danger of absolute editorial control." This agrees substantially with Powell's hunch that a desire for smoothness and readability in the end trumped a concern for accuracy with respect to the original languages.³⁹

I turn now to predominantly negative assessments of the NRSV. Two early reviews focused on the standard translation questions without overdue attention to the question of inclusive language. J. H. Dobson provides a close examination of Mark 1:1–20 and John 1:1–51, and a more cursory survey of other passages in John. He acknowledges the readability of the translation, but concludes that claims to have taken

³⁷ M. A. Throntveit, "The NRSV: All Things to All People," *WW* 16 (1996): 367–69. For examples of other reviews in this "mixed review" category, see M. Prokurat, "NRSV: Preliminary Report," *SVTQ* 43/3–4 (1999): 359–74. P. Mendham, "The New Standard?" *St. Mark's Review* 142 (Winter 1990): 34–37; S. Kubo, "The New Revised Standard Version," *AUSS* 29 (Spring 1991): 61–69.

³⁸ C. Lynn Nakamura, R. W. Doermann, R. R. Hutton, M. A. Powell, M. H. Hoops, S. K. Avotri, W. F. Taylor, Jr., "The New Revised Standard Version: A Review," *Trinity Seminary Review* 12 (Fall 1990): 77–94.

³⁹ J. J. M. Roberts, "An Evaluation of the NRSV: Demystifying Bible Translation," *Insights* 108 (1993): 25–36. Jason David Beduhn has subjected a wide spectrum of English translations to the test of accuracy in his *Truth in Translation: Accuracy and Bias in English Translations of the New Testament* (Lanham, Md.: University Press of America, 2003), and finds the NRSV mediocre in this respect.

advantage of advances in biblical studies “do not stand up to careful scrutiny.”⁴⁰ In an extensive analysis, John H. Stek (a member of the committee that produced the NIV translation) pays some attention to inclusive language, but concentrates on a range of other translation issues. He appreciates the NRSV’s improved style—“the washing out of all those cumbersome Hebraisms and archaisms”—but “when I began to follow my nose and concentrate on certain details, I grew increasingly disappointed.” He predicts that the NRSV will find greater success among liberal than among evangelical Christians.⁴¹

Since the issue of gender-inclusive language is not the main interest of the present essay, I quickly summarize the negative reviews of the NRSV that focus especially on that aspect of the translation. As might be expected, some criticize the NRSV for going too far, either with respect to the original languages or contemporary English.⁴² Specific objections are raised concerning the effect of inclusive language on Paul’s metaphor of adoption.⁴³ Other reviewers criticize the translators for not going far enough and allowing the translation to retain unnecessary elements of patriarchy and androcentrism.⁴⁴

Closer to the point of my essay are those reviews that take up specific aspects of the NRSV primarily from the perspective of accuracy, rather than readability, and find it wanting. Some focus on the translation of a specific passage. Paul Ellingworth rejects on linguistic and sociological grounds the NRSV’s translation of ἄνδρες ἀδελφοί in Acts 1:16 as “friends.”⁴⁵ Edwin Hostetter thinks the NRSV a “superb translation”

⁴⁰ J. H. Dobson, “New Revised Standard Version OUP 1995—Part 1. An Appraisal,” *Churchman* 118 (2004): 53–74. His analysis, however, is flawed because of his premise that “most of the New Testament was written by people who knew Hebrew and probably also Aramaic”—the handling of whose idioms serves as his main criterion of evaluation.

⁴¹ J. H. Stek, “The New Revised Standard Version: A Preliminary Assessment,” *RefR* 43 (Spring 1990): 171–88; a slightly revised form of the essay also appears in *CTJ* 26 (April 1991): 80–99.

⁴² P. B. Bretscher, “Translating the Bible: An Evaluation of the New Revised Standard Version,” *Logia* 3 (January 1994): 55–58; A. E. Steinmann, “Bible Translations among Luther’s Heirs,” *Logia* 10 (Epiphany 2001): 13–22.

⁴³ J. Alsup, “Translation as Interpretation and Communication,” *Insights* 108 (1993): 15–23; G. Vail, “Inclusive Language and the Equal Dignity of Women and Men in Christ,” *The Thomist* 67 (2003): 579–606.

⁴⁴ K. Farmer, “The Misleading Translations in the New Revised Standard Version of Proverbs,” *Daughters of Sarah* 21 (Winter 1995): 36–41; C. Mercer, “Contemporary Language and New Translations of the Bible: the Impact of Feminism,” *Religion and Public Education* 17 (Winter 1990): 89–98.

⁴⁵ P. Ellingworth, “‘Men and Brethren...’ (Acts 1:16),” *BT* 55 (2004): 153–55.

but he challenges its rendering of Cant 1:5 as “I am black and beautiful”—replacing the RSV’s “I am very dark but comely”—concluding that “at this juncture the translators have seemingly succumbed to tampering with the message of Scripture.”⁴⁶ Thomas Slater finds that the NRSV translation of υἱὸν ἀνθρώπου in Rev 1:13 and 14:14 as “*the* son of Man” rather than “*a* son of Man” is faulty. It “shows the heavy influence of gospel studies but does not take into account the use and function of the phrase in apocalyptic literature.”⁴⁷ Other responses take up consistent translation patterns. J. LaGrand objects to the frequent use of “Gentiles” in place of “nations” in the NRSV,⁴⁸ and Troy Martin systematically compares the RSV and NRSV with respect to their translation of terms for time and money, finding both deficient but the RSV as relatively superior.⁴⁹

Finally, two reviews provide sustained attention to specific biblical compositions. Jack Lewis examines the NRSV translation of the minor prophets, and although he draws no sweeping conclusions, his close analysis of individual points makes clear the puzzling lack of consistency characterizing the translation, not least on choices touching on text-criticism and inclusive language.⁵⁰ Paul Walasky’s examination of the NRSV translation of Luke-Acts comes closest to the topic of my essay. In his introductory comments, Walasky properly observes that “few biblical authors were more conscious of the problems and possibilities of language than Luke the Evangelist. From the elegant introduction to the Third Gospel to the final speech recorded in the Acts of the Apostles, Luke was fully aware that he was writing in a linguistically complex culture.” He notes further that “there is a significant amount of resonance that operates between the two Lukan volumes.”

In his examination of the opening chapters of the Gospel and the final section of Acts, Walasky finds the smoothness of the translation as a whole impressive, yet finds it wanting precisely in its literary sensitivity. The translation obscures the dense intertextual allusions to the LXX in Luke’s infancy account, and it fails to understand the

⁴⁶ E. C. Hostetter, “Mistranslation in Cant 1:5,” *AUSS* 34 (Spring 1994): 35–36.

⁴⁷ T. B. Slater, “HOMOION HUION ANTHROPOU in Rev. 1:13 and 14:14,” *BT* 44 (July 1993): 349–50.

⁴⁸ J. LaGrand, “Proliferation of the ‘Gentile’ in the New Revised Standard Version,” *BR* 41 (1996): 77–87.

⁴⁹ T. Martin, “Time and Money in Translation: A Comparison of the Revised Standard Version and the New Revised Standard Version,” *BR* 38 (1993): 55–73.

⁵⁰ J. P. Lewis, “The Minor Prophets in the NRSV,” *ResQ* 33 (1991): 129–39.

intratextual echoes in Luke's use of terms such as ὑπηρέται. He concludes, "the translators have certainly achieved an overall smoothness in their English text of Luke-Acts. However, it may be a texture that Luke never intended."⁵¹

NARRATIVE CRITICISM AND TRANSLATION

Walasky has well made the basic point about the importance of paying attention to narrative interconnections in Luke-Acts, a composition of considerable literary self-consciousness and sophistication. A significant body of scholarship devoted to the narrative artistry of Luke-Acts has confirmed the importance of literary connections within and between the two parts of Luke's work.⁵² In the rest of this essay, I want to show that the NRSV's failure to attend to such narrative signals has led to inadequate and at times erroneous translation. I will consider in turn two passages from the Gospel, then some themes that span the Gospel and Acts, and finally a passage in Acts.

The Prologue (Luke 1:1–4)

The importance of the prologue for the interpretation of the entire two-volume work is universally recognized.⁵³ It is the more shocking, then, that the NRSV's translation gets two of the critical elements in the prologue wrong. First, following the RSV, it translates the final phrase, ἵνα ἐπιγνῶς περὶ ὧν κατηχήθης λόγων τὴν ἀσφάλειαν, as, "so that you may know the truth concerning the things about which you have been instructed." But the translation of ἀσφάλεια as "truth" is both wrong and misleading, since it gives the impression that Luke writes in order to correct the factual accuracy of earlier narratives, but that is not

⁵¹ P. W. Walasky, "In Our Own Language": Working with the New Revised Standard Version of Luke-Acts," *RelEd* 85 (Spring 1990): 222–28.

⁵² The pioneering works were by H. J. Cadbury, *The Style and Literary Method of Luke* (HTS 6; Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1920) and *The Making of Luke-Acts* (New York: MacMillan and Company, 1927); fuller realizations of the literary approach are found in L. T. Johnson, *The Literary Function of Possessions in Luke-Acts* (SBLDS 39; Missoula: Scholars Press, 1977); and especially R. C. Tannehill, *The Narrative Unity of Luke-Acts: A Literary Interpretation* (2 vols.; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1986, 1990).

⁵³ See R. J. Dillon, "Previewing Luke's Project from his Prologue," *CBQ* 43 (1981): 205–21; S. Brown, "The Role of the Prologue in Determining the Purpose of Luke-Acts," *Perspectives on Luke-Acts* (ed. C. H. Talbert; Danville, Va.: Association of Baptist Professors of Religion, 1978), 99–111.

the case. A simple glimpse at the concordance reveals that Luke's use of ἀσφαλῆς and its cognates always stresses "security, certainty" (Acts 2:36; 16:23–24; 21:34; 22:30; 25:26, and above all, Acts 5:23), which the NRSV translation correctly communicates in those other passages. Luke's concern is not truth versus falsehood, but certainty versus doubt. He writes to give Theophilus "assurance" concerning the things about which he has been instructed.⁵⁴

Even worse is the NRSV's distortion of the prologue's main point. Luke sets out to write, not simply a διήγησις ("narrative") as others have done, but to write an "orderly account" (καθεξῆς σοι γράψαι). That the phrase καθεξῆς is of critical importance can be seen from its use to describe Peter's exposition in Acts 11:4: it is clear that, for Luke, a narrative told in proper sequence has a rhetorically convincing effect.⁵⁵ In this case the RSV gets the contrast exactly right, but for some inexplicable reason, the NRSV uses "orderly account" for *both* the noun διήγησις in 1:1 and the phrase καθεξῆς σοι γράψαι in 1:3, and thus destroys the author's deliberate and critical contrast. It is impossible to make sense to students of the prologue's point using the NRSV translation.

The Empty Tomb (Luke 24:1–12)

The first problem here is the puzzling decisions made about the text. The NRSV claimed that it made use of the best information about the ancient text, but that claim seems not to have much support in this passage. There is a consistent tendency in some western witnesses (D and some Old Latin MSS) to abbreviate the passage. These witnesses omit "of the Lord Jesus" after "the body" in Luke 24:3, the statement "he is not here but has arisen" in 24:6, the adjective "sinful" (ἁμαρτωλός) in 24:7, and the entirety of 24:12. In each case, the overwhelming external testimony supports the inclusion of the longer reading, and they are all found in the text of the 27th edition of Nestle-Aland (1993). The RSV read the shorter version in 24:3, 6, and 12, but retained the adjective ἁμαρτωλός in 24:7, translating "sinful men." The NRSV, in contrast, has the longer reading in 24:6, 7, and 12, but omits "of the Lord Jesus"

⁵⁴ For the argument, see Johnson, *Gospel of Luke*, 3–10, 28–30.

⁵⁵ G. Schneider, "Zur Bedeutung von *kathexes* im lukanischen Doppelwerk, *ZNW* 68 (1977): 128–31.

in 24:3. The choices made by each translation are mysterious, especially since there has been no shift in external evidence, and the minority witnesses show such a clear pattern of omission. The footnotes provide no explanation for these textual choices.

Attention to the literary fabric of Luke-Acts would have provided more evidence to support the inclusion of Luke 24:3, “of the Lord Jesus” (τοῦ [κυρίου] Ἰησοῦ), in two ways. First, the statement in 24:34 “The Lord has risen indeed, and has appeared to Simon,” reveals the author’s comfort with using the resurrection title in the gospel narrative, anticipating its thematic employment with respect to Jesus in Acts (1:6, 21; 2:36; 4:26, 33; 7:59, etc.). Second, Luke is distinctive for using his narrative voice to call Jesus κύριος even in the pre-resurrection portions of the Gospel (Luke 10:1; 17:5–6; 18:6; 22:61).

The exclusion of κυρίου Ἰησοῦ by the NRSV in Luke 24:3 is exacerbated by the mistranslation of 24:5. The two men ask the women, τί ζητεῖτε τὸν ζῶντα μετὰ τῶν νεκρῶν? The question is unique to Luke. The NRSV follows the inept rendering in the RSV, “Why do you look for [RSV: seek] the living among the dead?” This translation makes it seem as though it were a matter of neighborhoods: Jesus is among the living people, not among the dead people, and the women are looking in the wrong place. But Luke has τὸν ζῶντα, in the singular, which can adequately be translated only as “the Living One,” or “The One Who Lives.” In other words, Luke has the messengers characterize Jesus alone in a manner corresponding to the title of Lord: Jesus shares the life and power of “the living God” (Acts 14:15). Thus, we see the declaration “he lives” in 24:23, and in Acts, Jesus shows ἑαυτὸν ζῶντα to the disciples (1:3) and Peter calls him ἀρχηγὸν τῆς ζωῆς in Acts 3:15.

In Luke 24:7, in turn, if the reading εἰς χεῖρας ἀνθρώπων ἁμαρτωλῶν is accepted—it is the only time the phrase occurs in Luke-Acts—then the translation of the RSV, “sinful men” is considerably better than the NRSV’s “sinners.” In fact, a better translation still would be “men who are sinners.” The reason is the way in which Luke’s Gospel so frequently speaks of ἁμαρτωλοί as those whom Jesus calls and who respond to his message (5:8, 30, 32; 7:34, 37, 39; 15:1, 2, 7, 10; 18:3; 19:7). Translating the phrase more fully would make clear that it was a group of men who were sinners—the leaders of the people in Jerusalem—who were responsible for the death of Jesus, and not all the “sinners” who heard and obeyed him during his ministry. This is one of the cases in which a concern for inclusive language obscures the literary point. That clarity

sometimes is more important that inclusivity is demonstrated by the NRSV itself, when it adds “the women” to the RSV in 24:5, to make clear who was doing what to whom.

A final example of how sensitivity to the larger narrative can assist a translation is found in Luke 24:12. Although the NRSV places it in the text rather than relegate it to a footnote as does the RSV, it follows the RSV’s flat translation: after seeing the linen cloths, “then he went home, amazed at what had happened,” thus translating καὶ ἀπῆλθεν πρὸς ἑαυτὸν θαυμάζων τὸ γεγονός. The two translations take πρὸς ἑαυτὸν (literally, “toward himself”) as the direct object of ἀπῆλθεν (“he went away”), and provide the fairly desperate rendering “went home.” Three observations can be made. The first is that Luke never uses this sort of construction for “going home.” The second is that Luke does use constructions with ἑαυτοῦ for a variety of interior acts of introspection (see 12:17; 16:3; 18:4), the most notable being the case of the Lost Son who “coming to himself said” εἰς ἑαυτὸν δὲ ἐλθὼν ἔφη (15:17) and the Pharisee who “prayed toward himself” (πρὸς ἑαυτὸν ταῦτα προσήχετο, 18:11). The third is that Peter is preeminently the character who, later in the narrative, experiences interior doubt and questioning (see Acts 10:17, 19, 28–29). It is entirely appropriate at this moment, after his bold declaration of loyalty (Luke 22:33) and subsequent three-fold denial of Jesus (23:54–62), that Peter should “go away, marveling to himself at what had happened” (compare also Mary in Luke 2:19, 51).

The NRSV translation of the empty-tomb account reveals confusion concerning text-criticism and inattention to the narrative connections revealed by the passage. The habit of translating passages in isolation—exaggerated by the perspectives of form-criticism—means missing the meaning embedded in passages by an author who is working out themes across the narrative as a whole.

Missing Literary Themes

The NRSV detracts from the narrative effect of Luke-Acts also by failing to recognize and exploit literary themes that run through the two-volume work as a whole. At this point it is fair to recognize that two distinct translational values may enter into conflict. The first is the principle that diction should always respect the immediate context and the usage appropriate to that context. Following this principle alone would mean that different English words might be chosen for the same Greek term no matter how frequently the Greek term is used by an

author. The literary effect that is obvious in the Greek is ignored by the translator. The second principle is that diction should attend to the rhetorical effects embedded in the Greek by an author, the point of which may not be immediately evident to the translator, but the presence of which cannot be denied. Following this principle alone would mean using exactly the same term in each case, even if such translation appears somewhat awkward in the specific context.

Some compromises must be struck when translating a substantial composition like Luke-Acts, which, in fact, draws readers through a long span of years, many characters, and diverse cultural settings. My complaint is that the NRSV—in this respect not totally unlike the RSV—seems simply to ignore the larger narrative effects intended by the author. In Luke-Acts, one of the author's techniques is to show continuity across the two parts of the story, between characters in the story, and in God's work throughout the story. Two examples in particular have confounded my efforts to communicate the effects of Luke's literary art as found in the Greek, because the NRSV translation manages to make them either obscure or invisible. In the first case, the NRSV fails to correct the inadequacy of the RSV; in the second case, it abandons the RSV's decent effort to capture the theme.

Righteous, Righteousness

It has long been recognized that NT authors other than Paul are concerned about and have given some thought to righteousness.⁵⁶ Luke-Acts uses the noun δικαιοσύνη once in the Gospel (1:75) and four times in Acts (10:35; 13:10; 17:31; 24:25), the noun δικαίωμα once in the Gospel (1:6), the adverb δικαίως once in the Gospel (23:41), the verb δικαιοῦν five times in the Gospel (7:29, 35; 10:29; 16:15; 18:14) and twice in Acts (13:38, 39), and the adjective δίκαιος eleven times in the Gospel (1:6, 17; 2:25; 5:32; 12:57; 14:14; 15:7; 18:9; 20:20; 23:47, 50) and five times in Acts (4:19; 7:52; 10:22; 22:14; 24:15). Translation of these terms can swing in the direction of the broader biblical sense of "righteousness" in the sense of being in proper covenantal relationship with God, or more toward the narrower sense of "justified" within a forensic context. Recognizing the way Luke-Acts is saturated with Septuagintal diction, the NRSV correctly renders the majority of instances of δικαιοσύνη

⁵⁶ See A. Descamps, *Les Justes et la Justice dans les Evangiles et le christianisme primitive hormis la doctrine proprement paulinienne* (Gembloux: J. Duculot, 1950).

and δίκαιος as “righteousness” and “righteous” (see Luke 1:6, 17, 75; 2:25; 5:32; 12:57; 14:14; 15:7; 18:9; 23:50; Acts 3:14; 4:19; 7:52; 22:14; 24:15). The reader is able to discern that righteousness is a thematic concern that Luke extends through both volumes.

So far, so good. But there are other cases where the theme disappears because of the NRSV’s rendering. In Luke 20:20, Jesus is confronted by those ὑποκρινομένους ἑαυτοὺς δικαίους εἶναι. It is not easy to render in English, but the NRSV’s “who pretended to be honest” misses a clear literary signal back to 18:9, and thus the clear identification of these hostile interlocutors as Pharisees. Better would be, “they sent as spies those who pretended that they were themselves righteous.” Similarly, it is difficult to know why Cornelius is characterized as “an upright and God-fearing man” in Acts 10:22, instead of “righteous and God-fearing.” Equally puzzling is the translation a few verses later of ὁ φοβούμενος αὐτὸν καὶ ἐργαζόμενος δικαιοσύνην δεκτὸς αὐτῷ ἐστίν (Acts 10:35) as “anyone who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him.”

Much more problematic is the NRSV’s translation (here following the RSV) of the centurion’s statement at the crucifixion of Jesus, Ὅντως ὁ ἄνθρωπος οὗτος δίκαιος ἦν as “Certainly this man was innocent” (Luke 23:47). This is a perfect example of a concern for the immediate context—presumably the interest of Luke in asserting the innocence of Jesus (23:14) and the historically outsider perspective of the centurion—triumphing over Luke’s thematic interest in the narrative as a whole. The translation should be, “Truly this man was righteous.” Not only does this rendition correspond with Luke’s entire portrayal of Jesus in his passion account, but it leads to the declaration of Jesus in Acts as ὁ δίκαιος, “the Righteous One” (Acts 3:14; 7:52).⁵⁷ The NRSV translates these passages correctly; the wonder is that the translators could not grasp the importance of translating Luke 23:47 in the same way.

The theme of righteousness is eliminated also by the way the NRSV handles passages in which δικαιοῦν appears. My criticism here is also directed at myself, for in my own translation of the Gospel of Luke, I missed these connections. In Luke 7:29, where Luke inserts an edito-

⁵⁷ See especially R. J. Karris, “Luke 23 and Luke’s Thematic Christology and Soteriology,” in *Luke, Artist and Theologian: Luke’s Passion Account as Literature* (New York: Paulist, 1985), 79–119.

rial comment contrasting the response of the Pharisees and lawyers to John the Baptist with the response of the people and tax collectors. He says the first group “rejected God’s plan for them,” whereas the second group ἐδικαίωσαν τὸν θεόν. I acknowledge the difficulty in rendering this.⁵⁸ The NRSV has “acknowledged the justice of God” and notes as an alternative, “praised God.” Neither translation captures the sense that the recognition of God’s way of making righteous is at stake. When the verb δικαιοῦν is used again a mere six verses later, no one would suspect from the NRSV’s “wisdom is vindicated by all her children” (7:35), that Luke may have intended the two lines to be heard as call and response.

The usage in Luke 7: 29 and 7:35 are truly difficult to render coherently, much less as part of a developing Lukan theme. The same cannot be said of the remaining instances of δικαιοῦν. If the NRSV translators had been paying attention to their own renderings of δίκαιος as “righteous,” they might have been able to follow through consistently in such passages as 16:15, where Jesus tells the Pharisees, ἐστε οἱ δικαιοῦντες ἑαυτοὺς ἐνώπιον τῶν ἀνθρώπων (“you make yourselves righteous in the sight of others”), which the NRSV renders, “you justify yourselves in the sight of others,”⁵⁹ and especially in 18:9–14 (the parable of the Pharisee and Tax Collector), where the NRSV translates δίκαιος correctly in 18:9 (“he told this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous”), but translate δικαιοῦν at the end of the parable as “this man went down to his home justified (δεδικαιωμένος) rather than the other.” The reversal effect of the parable would have been more evident if 18:14 were translated as “declared righteous” rather than justified.⁶⁰

More troubling is the NRSV’s translation of Acts 13:38–39. At the climax of Paul’s speech at Antioch of Pisidia, Paul turns from the corruption experienced by David to a restatement of his claim in 13:30–35 that Jesus was raised from the dead: “But he whom God raised up experienced no corruption. Let it be known to you therefore, my brothers, that through this man forgiveness of sins is proclaimed

⁵⁸ In fact my own translation, “justified God,” falls short of the proposal I make, although (given the luxury of notes) I trope my own translation as, “recognize the righteousness from God” (*The Gospel of Luke*, 121–23).

⁵⁹ I also use “justify” in my translation, but make the connection to 7:29 (*The Gospel of Luke*, 249–50).

⁶⁰ My own translation of 18:9–14 is inconsistent in just the same way.

to you; by this man Jesus everyone who believes is free from all those sins from which you could not be freed by the law of Moses.” The first thing that should be said about this rendering is that, for a translation that seeks to be gender-inclusive, this passage contains an unnecessary number of “he’s” and “man’s”; the phrase “this one” could have served throughout as an adequate rendering of οὗτος. Second, the NRSV inserts the name “Jesus” where it does not appear in the Greek (acknowledging the addition in the note). Third, no one reading the English would recognize anything even remotely resembling Paul’s teaching on righteousness through faith, or the climactic statement concerning the theme of righteousness in Luke-Acts.

Yet by using the verb δικαιοῦν twice, it is clear that Luke wants to represent Paul’s teaching (from his own perspective concerning the forgiveness of sins, to be sure), and align Paul with one of his important narrative themes. The NRSV’s “free from sins” adds the term “sin” where it does not appear in the Greek, but eliminates the theme of righteousness. A more accurate translation would be: “Let it be known to you, brothers, that through this one forgiveness of sins is being proclaimed! And from all the things which by the law of Moses you were not able to be made righteous (οὐκ ἠδυνήθητε ἐν νόμῳ Μωϋσέως δικαιωθῆναι), in this one everyone who believes is made righteous (ἐν τούτῳ πᾶς ὁ πιστεῦων δικαιοῦται).”

God’s Visitation

Another example of Luke’s Septuagintal style is found in his frequent use of ἐπισκέψασθαι and ἐπισκοπή in the sense of “God’s visitation.” In the LXX the terms are used most frequently to translate **רָאָה**, and suggests both the divine oversight of a human situation and an intervention of physical dimensions. Thus, in Gen 21:1, the Lord “visited” (ἐπεσκέψατο) Sarah in the conception of Isaac; in Gen 50:24, Joseph promises that the Lord will “visit” them to bring them up out of the land of Egypt; in Exod 3:14 the Lord “has observed” what has happened to the people, and in Exodus 4:31, the Lord “visited” the people of Israel, and so forth. The verb and noun definitely carry some sense of “look upon” and “care for,” but primarily they denote an actual physical presence in behalf of someone for good or ill. The RSV in both testaments tends to translate as “visit/ visitation.” That the translators of the NRSV are aware of this meaning is made clear from the rendering of passages outside Luke-Acts, as in Matt 25:36, 43 (“I was sick and in prison and you visited me”), and in Jas 1:27 (true religion

is “to care for orphans and widows in their distress”). The translators know that in the biblical idiom ἐπισκέψασθαι means more than having a positive disposition toward someone. It involves approaching them.

The translators of the NRSV recognize this meaning in Luke-Acts as well. In Acts 7:23, they have Moses “visit (ἐπισκέψασθαι) his relatives, the Israelites. Similarly, they show Paul summoning Barnabas, “Come, let us return and visit (ἐπισκέψασθαι) the believers in every city,” although this once more sounds more like a social call than a “visitation” that involves apostolic oversight. The NRSV translators even retain the reading of the RSV in Luke 19:44, “you did not recognize the time of your visitation (ἐπισκοπῆς σου)” although it adds the words “from God.” Unfortunately, in every other passage where ἐπισκέπτειν occurs, the NRSV translators alter the RSV and obliterate the traces of an important Lukan theme.

In Luke 1:68, where the RSV has “he has visited and redeemed his people,” the NRSV replaces with “he has looked with favor on his people and redeemed them.” Luke 1:78 is admittedly a difficult construction (διὰ σπλάγχνα ἐλέους θεοῦ ἡμῶν ἐν οἷς ἐπισκέπεται ἡμᾶς ἀνατολή ἐξ ὕψους), which the RSV renders as “through the tender mercy of our God, when the day shall dawn on us from on high.” The RSV adds in a footnote, “or *whereby the dayspring will visit*. Other ancient authorities read, *since the dayspring has visited*.” The note allows readers to see the theme of visitation underlying the freer translation. In the NRSV, there is simply, “by the tender mercy of our God, the dawn from on high will break upon us,” and the footnote has only, “other ancient authorities read *has broken*.” The theme of God’s visitation has disappeared completely from Zechariah’s song, even though Luke placed it there twice.

When Jesus raises the widow of Nain’s son, the crowd cries out (in the RSV), “‘A great prophet has arisen among us’ and ‘God has visited (ἐπεσκέψατο) his people’” (Luke 7:16). Luke clearly wants the reader to identify God’s “visitation of the people” precisely with the prophet Jesus at work among the people, and this prepares for Jesus’ later rebuke that Jerusalem missed the “time of your visitation” in 19:44. The NRSV, as we have seen, does have “visitation” in the second instance. But in 7:16, the NRSV has “‘A great prophet has risen among us’ and ‘God has looked favorably on his people,’”—with no footnote. As a result of the elimination of the theme of visitation from Luke 1:68, 1:78, and 7:16, the reader is ill-prepared to recognize Luke’s reference to Moses “visiting his relatives” in Acts 7:23 as a deliberate evocation of the biblical

language and part of Luke's narrative strategy of portraying Jesus as the "prophet like Moses." The final stroke by which this theme is eliminated by the NRSV, however, occurs in Acts 15, a passage I want to consider in greater detail.

Acts 15:6–18

The account of the apostolic council in Acts 15 is a watershed in the Acts narrative: the decision to include Gentiles without requiring circumcision and the keeping of the Law of Moses marks a transition from the preceding narrative, in which the stories of Peter and Paul were interwoven, to one which focuses almost exclusively on Paul's work among Gentiles. Luke's version of the meeting also represents the climax of Luke's carefully composed narrative concerning the first steps toward Gentile inclusion extending from chapters ten to fifteen.⁶¹ It would seem that here in particular sensitivity to Luke's literary concerns would characterize a translation. But such sensitivity is lacking in the NRSV. I note four aspects of its translation especially deserving comment.

1. The substantial citation from Amos 9:11–12 that James uses as scriptural support for the decision to follow God's initiative concerning Gentiles also defines the two essential stages of Luke's narrative "in sequence" (1:3): the restoration of the people Israel ("the dwelling of David") accomplished in the first Jerusalem community, and then the inclusion of the nations "over whom my name has been called." This citation of Scripture, as so often in Luke-Acts, depends entirely on the Septuagint rather than the Hebrew, and depends on the LXX version for its force. The MT goes in an entirely different direction. The LXX, however, is not a freewheeling alteration of the Hebrew; it simply vocalizes the Hebrew consonants differently, to yield "so that the rest of humanity might seek the Lord" instead of "so that they may possess the remnant of Edom" in the MT.⁶² This is surely a case needing a footnote to explain the glaring divergence between what readers find in their NRSV translation of Amos 9:11–12 and what must appear to them as James's *mis*-citation. No such explanatory note appears either

⁶¹ See Johnson, *Acts of the Apostles*, 180–281; idem, *Scripture and Discernment: Decision Making in the Church* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1996).

⁶² See L. T. Johnson, *Septuagintal Midrash in the Speeches of Acts* (The Pere Marquette Lecture in Theology; Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 2002), 17–18; idem, *The Acts of the Apostles*, 264–65.

in the RSV or the NRSV; reference is simply made to Amos 9:11–12, Jer 12:15 and Isa 45:21, which does nothing to clarify.

2. When discussing Luke's theme of righteousness, I noted above how in Acts 13:38–39, the NRSV obscured the connection between faith and righteousness. Paul's statement in that passage is just part of an intense concentration on Gentiles coming to faith in Acts 10–14 (10:43; 11:17, 21; 13:8, 12, 39, 41, 48; 14:1, 9, 22, 23, 27). We would therefore expect special attention to be given to the three occurrences of πιστεύειν (15:7, 11) and πίστις (15:9) in this passage. Once more, however, the NRSV obscures the literary (and theological) connections in Luke's narrative. The inherent difficulties of rendering πίστις/πιστεύειν in English are daunting, since English has no verb "faithing" and therefore must often use "believing." When an author's whole point is at stake, though, even some awkwardness in English should be tolerated for the sake of accuracy.

In Acts 15:7, Luke has Peter state that God chose him to be the one through whom the Gentiles should ἀκοῦσαι... τὸν λόγον τοῦ εὐαγγελίου καὶ πιστεῦσαι. The RSV has "hear and believe," which at least maintains the verbal quality of the infinitive. The NRSV has "become believers," which sounds as though the Gentiles simply joined the church rather than responded to the good news with faith. As a result, in both translations, readers are liable to miss the cumulative force of 15:9, when Peter states that because "God cleansed their heart by faith" he made no distinction between us and them. Finally, this inconsistency means that the entire point of 15:11 is missed, apparently even to the translators themselves. Peter asks why they are testing God by putting a yoke on disciples, and concludes, ἀλλὰ διὰ τῆς χάριτος τοῦ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ πιστεύομεν σωθῆναι καθ' ὃν τρόπον κακεῖνοι. Following the RSV closely, the NRSV translates, "On the contrary, we believe that we will be saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus just as they will." We can leave aside the question whether διὰ τῆς χάριτος τοῦ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ might in this case better be translated exegetically, as "through the gift that is the Lord Jesus," and note that both the RSV and NRSV have mistranslated the main clause. It is not "we believe that we will be saved," but "we are having faith (or believing) in order to be saved." The grammar matches perfectly Acts 14:9, where Paul observes that the lame man ἔχει πίστιν τοῦ σωθῆναι, "had faith in order to be saved." The translation I suggest better respects the sequence of statements that Luke has placed before this in Peter's mouth in 5:7 and 5:9, and the entire narrative sequence preceding this passage. It also

makes clearer why the means of *Gentile* salvation (that is, inclusion in the people)⁶³ is now seen as the norm even for the *Jewish* members of the community (καθ' ὃν τρόπον κἀκεῖνοι = according to the manner they also are).

3. Earlier in this paper, I noted how the important Lukan theme of God's visitation has virtually vanished in the NRSV. This passage contains the final and most revealing example. If the theme had been maintained in the translation, the attentive reader would have been able to perceive Moses coming to the people as a visitation (Acts 7:23), the birth of John as a visitation (Luke 1:68, 78), and the ministry of Jesus as a visitation of God (Luke 7:16; 19:44). Now, James is about to quote Amos to the effect that God is extending the people also to include the Gentiles. And preceding that citation, Luke has James begin, Συμεὼν ἐξηγήσατο καθὼς πρῶτον ὁ θεὸς ἐπεσκέψατο λαβεῖν ἐξ ἐθνῶν λαὸν τῷ ὀνόματι αὐτοῦ. The RSV properly translates, "Simeon has related how God first visited the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name,"⁶⁴ although "made visitation" would have better captured the formal character of God's intervention. In either rendering, the reader can perceive how Luke establishes a continuity between the stages of his narrative. In the NRSV, however, the weight of ἐπισκέψασθαι is again missed: "Simeon has related how God first looked favorably on the Gentiles, to take from among them a people for his name."

4. Finally, both the RSV and the NRSV mistranslate James' final statement leading up to his citation from Amos: καὶ τούτῳ συμφωνοῦσιν οἱ λόγοι τῶν προφητῶν, καθὼς γέγραπται. They have, "This agrees with the words of the prophets, as it is written." But Luke's grammar demands the opposite, with τούτῳ being in the dative case: the words of the prophets, he says, agree *with this thing*. There is great significance in getting this right. The RSV and NRSV translations imply that the Gentile faith and inclusion in the people fits within what was already known from Scripture. But as throughout his narrative, Luke wants the reader to see that it is God's working that opens up the Scriptures. God's visitation precedes the human understanding of its significance. The annunciations to Zechariah and Mary precedes their interpretive hymns, Simeon receives the child before he gives voice to prophecy,

⁶³ See L. T. Johnson, "The Social Dimensions of *Soteria* in Luke-Acts and Paul," *Society of Biblical Literature Seminar Papers*, 1993 (ed. E. H. Lovering; SBLSP 32; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1993), 520–36.

⁶⁴ N. A. Dahl, "A People for His Name" (Acts 15:14), *NTS* 4 (1957–58): 319–27.

Jesus is raised before the disciples understand his predictions and the sayings of the Scripture. So also here: it is God's visitation among the Gentiles that demands a reinterpretation of Amos, not a reading of Amos that legitimates the Gentile mission.

CONCLUSION

Although the NRSV reads well, it fails significantly as a translation in terms of a faithful rendering of the original language of the NT. As this essay suggests, the closer one looks at a specific composition such as Luke-Acts, the worse the translation appears. There may be several explanations. Perhaps it was the result of the group process and the disproportionate influence of the final editing. Perhaps it was a lack of attentiveness to basic translation issues because of attention paid to inclusive language and euphony. I have argued here that among other causes, some blame also attaches to a habit of atomistic (passage-by-passage) translation that fails to take into account the larger narrative or rhetorical fashioning of a composition. In the case of the NT, at least, the NRSV does not provide a reliable basis for exegesis or Bible study for those without knowledge of Greek.

PAUL AND RACIAL RECONCILIATION:
A POSTCOLONIAL APPROACH TO 2 CORINTHIANS 3:12–18

Brad R. Braxton

“If God is the Spirit of freedom for the least in society, then this spirit has to be active as an event and process of struggle even where the name of Jesus is not known . . . Among the cries of all the marginalized peoples, God reveals God’s self in all faiths around the globe. To deny this is to possibly participate in a new form of imperialism—a Christo-centric imperialism against the majority of the other faiths on earth.”¹

I am passionately concerned about the contemporary theological and ideological implications of biblical texts in general and Pauline texts in particular. These concerns were formed by the inspiring worship and pastoral preaching in the African American Baptist congregation of my youth, where my father served as pastor and my mother as a strong lay leader. There, I witnessed how sacred texts shaped people’s understanding of God and transformed their daily lives.

Later as I pursued university training, I began understanding more clearly the theological and ideological implications of Pauline interpretation. Under the exacting supervision of Professor Carl Holladay, I wrote a New Testament Ph.D. dissertation that gave expression to my interpretive concerns.² The dissertation investigated how Paul confronted the perplexing problem of Greco-Roman slavery in the Corinthian congregation. It also examined how nineteenth- and twentieth-century interpretive debates about 1 Cor 7:17–24 continued and expanded the theological and ideological struggles evident in that biblical text.

The present essay is a natural continuation of the work I began under Professor Holladay’s tutelage: How might a reading of another text in the Corinthian Correspondence shape twenty-first-century conversations about racial reconciliation among people still affected by the Trans-Atlantic slavery of the fifteenth through the nineteenth

¹ Dwight N. Hopkins, “A Black American Perspective on Interfaith Dialogue,” in *Living Stones in the Household of God: The Legacy and Future of Black Theology* (ed. Linda E. Thomas; Minneapolis: Fortress, 2004), 171–72.

² *The Tyranny of Resolution: I Corinthians 7:17–24* (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2000).

centuries? I hope that my current handling of these theological and ideological concerns pays appropriate homage to Professor Holladay's investment in and enduring influence upon my calling to be a scholar for the church.

POSTCOLONIAL STUDIES: MOVING FROM THE
"ANCIENT" AND THE "ACADEMIC"

Given my theological and ideological concerns, postcolonial approaches to biblical interpretation provide an excellent way forward. Postcolonial studies is a diverse and expanding set of interpretive practices and theories that place the colonialism and neo-colonialism of Europe and the United States at the center of interpretive conversations. Broadly defined, postcolonial studies engage "the overlapping issues of race, empire, diaspora, and ethnicity."³ More specifically, postcolonial studies are concerned with colonialism—"the organized deployment of racialized and gendered constructs for practices of acquiring and maintaining political control over other social groups, settling their lands with new residents, and/or exploiting that land and its peoples through military and administrative occupiers."⁴ Closely associated with colonialism is imperialism, which consists of a "more coherent organizational form" by which colonizers present themselves as missionaries to the world.⁵ Postcolonial studies also examine the attempt of the literal and figurative descendants of former colonizers to re-assert their colonial influence ("neo-colonialism" or "neo-imperialism"), as well as the political and cultural possibilities that emerge when formerly colonized people resist and transcend colonialism's oppressive effects ("decolonization").⁶

Recently, Pauline scholars have explored ancient imperialism as an inescapable aspect of early Christianity.⁷ For example, attention to

³ R. S. Sugirtharajah, *Asian Biblical Hermeneutics and Postcolonialism: Contesting the Interpretations* (Maryknoll: Orbis, 1998), 15.

⁴ Mark Lewis Taylor, "Spirit and Liberation: Achieving Postcolonial Theology in the United States," in *Postcolonial Theologies: Divinity and Empire* (ed. Catherine Keller, Michael Nausner, and Mayra Rivera; St. Louis: Chalice, 2004), 42.

⁵ Seamus Deane, "Imperialism/Nationalism," in *Critical Terms for Literary Study* (2d ed.; ed. Frank Lentricchia and Thomas McLaughlin; Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), 354.

⁶ Fernando F. Segovia, *Decolonizing Biblical Studies: A View from the Margins* (Maryknoll: Orbis, 2000).

⁷ Notable examples include: Richard A. Horsley, ed., *Paul and Empire: Religion and*

ancient Roman imperialism has prompted interpreters to rethink key Pauline terms such as “righteousness/justice” (δικαιοσύνη), “gospel” (εὐαγγέλιον), and “faith” (πίστις). These studies also have reminded us of the blurry boundaries between religion and politics in the first century CE Mediterranean world.

In the main, however, the emphasis in many recent political readings of Paul’s letters has been upon the ancient world. Yet postcolonial studies invite interpreters to acknowledge more readily the current manifestations of imperialism that abound in many cultures. To read Paul against the backdrop of ancient Rome is intellectually profitable, but the Roman Empire crumbled centuries ago. A more intriguing question is: What happens if postcolonial critics begin to engage Pauline texts more fully with respect to the neo-imperialism of the twenty-first century?

Biblical scholarship must engage more thoroughly the impulse of empire that runs through so much political, economic, academic, and religious life in the United States and other so-called “first world” countries in the Northern hemisphere. If biblical scholarship avoids such engagement, it will fall prey again to that sharp critique leveled by Walter Wink more than three decades ago: “The outcome of biblical studies in the academy is a trained incapacity to deal with the real problems of actual living persons in their daily lives.”⁸

As a politically engaged African American, I cannot ignore the contemporary empire. It is the legislative decisions made on the Potomac River and the financial decisions made on the Hudson River—not the ancient machinations of the Caesars on the Tiber River—that currently threaten the well-being of so many people in the United States and abroad. Thus, this essay unapologetically moves the interpretive conversation concerning Pauline texts from an emphasis upon ancient imperialism to an emphasis upon contemporary imperialism.

Power in Roman Imperial Society (Harrisburg: Trinity Press International, 1997); idem, ed., *Paul and Politics: Ekklesia, Israel, Imperium, Interpretation* (Harrisburg: Trinity Press International, 2000); and idem, ed., *Paul and the Roman Imperial Order* (Harrisburg: Trinity Press International, 2004).

⁸ Walter Wink, *The Bible in Human Transformation: Toward a New Paradigm for Biblical Study* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1973), 6.

A CONTEMPORARY SOCIAL STRUGGLE:
RACIAL RECONCILIATION AND TRANS-ATLANTIC SLAVERY

In light of my interest in postcolonial approaches, I began pondering how a postcolonial reading of a Pauline text might facilitate the demanding, but necessary, work of contemporary racial reconciliation.⁹ Two recent events galvanized my efforts to create dialogue among a Pauline text, a postcolonial methodology, and the issue of racial reconciliation. First, 2007 marked the bicentennial commemoration of the abolition of the Trans-Atlantic slave trade in the British Empire.¹⁰ Second, in conjunction with this international commemoration, I was selected to give the 2006–2007 Bray Lectures.

*Bicentennial Commemoration of the Abolition of the
Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade*

In 1807, courageous social agitation and revolt and coordinated abolitionist efforts finally brought an end, at least in legal principle, to the international trading of Africans as slaves in the British colonies.¹¹ For centuries, this “triangular trafficking” had shipped whiskey and guns from England to West Africa; slaves from West Africa to the Caribbean and the Americas; and sugar and cotton from the Caribbean and

⁹ Social scientists and cultural critics debate the meaning of the term “race.” Many scholars have refuted the validity of “race” as a marker of fixed biological differences. Still, “race” as a social construction by which individuals and communities differentiate themselves remains a powerful and viable cultural force, especially in the United States. For further discussion, consult Richard Delgado and Jean Stefancic, *Critical Race Theory: An Introduction* (New York: New York University Press, 2001), and Steve Fenton, *Ethnicity* (Cambridge: Polity, 2003). For another attempt to merge Pauline scholarship and dialogue about contemporary racial reconciliation, consult my *No Longer Slaves: Galatians and African American Experience* (Collegeville: Liturgical, 2002).

¹⁰ The bicentennial commemoration occurred in Great Britain in 2007 and in the United States in 2008. While this historic legislation was signed in the British Parliament and the United States Congress in March 1807, the legislation did not become effective officially until January 1, 1808.

¹¹ The abolition of the Trans-Atlantic *slave trade* and the abolition of Trans-Atlantic *slavery* were distinct events. Many British merchants continued in the illegal trade of African slaves for years and, in some cases, decades after the parliamentary act of 1807. Also, from 1807 to 1865, the violence of chattel slavery in the United States intensified, unleashing an escalating savagery against Africans in the so-called “New World.” This savagery culminated in the United States’ Civil War. Thus, even after 1807, the carnage of slavery led to ever more carnage, as the fledgling American nation fought internally about the fate of its enslaved.

the Americas to England. On March 25, 1807, an act of the British Parliament abolished this international trade.¹²

This event in 1807 forecasted the possibility of a more humane era in interpersonal and international relations, especially between people of African and European descent. Abolitionist activities—before and after 1807—released palpable positive energy into the moral universe. However, for two centuries, many well-intentioned people have ignored, resisted, or failed to operate fully under that moral energy. Two hundred years later, genuine reconciliation between groups estranged by slavery is still, in many regards, an unrealized hope. Thus, the bicentennial commemoration seemed to me an opportune occasion to address the role of the Bible, and especially of Paul's letters, in contemporary efforts to heal past injustices concerning slavery.

The use of Paul's letters in the ideological justification of slavery is well-documented.¹³ In light of the bicentennial commemoration, I raised a different question: How might Paul's letters provide theological and ideological energy for contemporary conversations about racial reconciliation? Instead of ignoring Paul or maligning him for the role of his letters in promoting the "iniquitous institution" of slavery, I wanted to engage his letters for the healing balm they might possess.¹⁴

Bray Lectures in Ghana and England

The United Society for the Propagation of the Gospel (USPG) and the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge (SPCK), two London-based missionary organizations, selected me as the 2006–2007 Bray Lecturer. Named in honor of Thomas Bray, a seventeenth-century

¹² For excellent historical accounts of the abolition of the slave trade and of slavery, consult Adam Hochschild, *Bury the Chains: Prophets and Rebels in the Fight to Free an Empire's Slaves* (Boston: Mariner, 2006), and Christopher Leslie Brown, *Moral Capital: Foundations of British Abolitionism* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006).

¹³ Consult, for example, Clarice J. Martin, "The Haustafeln (Household Codes) in African American Biblical Interpretation: 'Free Slaves' and 'Subordinate Women,'" in *Stony the Road We Trod: African American Biblical Interpretation* (ed. Cain Hope Felder; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1991), 206–31; C. Michelle Venable-Ridley, "Paul and the African American Community," in *Embracing the Spirit: Womanist Perspectives on Hope, Salvation and Transformation* (ed. Emilie M. Townes; Maryknoll: Orbis, 1997), 212–33; and Braxton, *The Tyranny of Resolution*, 235–64.

¹⁴ For a cogent analysis of the African American engagement with Paul's ambiguity concerning slavery and freedom, consult Allen Dwight Callahan, "'Brother Saul': An Ambivalent Witness to Freedom," *Semeia* 83/84 (1998): 235–62.

British missionary, this lectureship provides an opportunity for an academic theologian with church connections to learn and give lectures in two international contexts.¹⁵

I traveled to Ghana in December 2006 for the first part of the lectureship. In addition to the bicentennial commemoration of the abolition of the slave trade, in March 2007, Ghana would mark its fiftieth year of independence from British colonial rule. While in Ghana, I learned about the history of the country before and after European slavery and colonialism. I met with religious leaders and presented seminars on the role of religion in the oppression and liberation of people of African descent. My itinerary also included visits to historical sites, such as the home of W. E. B. Du Bois in Accra;¹⁶ the memorial to Kwame Nkrumah, Ghana's first president; and the slave castles in Cape Coast and Elmina, where thousands of Africans were imprisoned prior to being shipped to the Caribbean and the Americas.

The second part of the lectureship occurred in England in March 2007. I gave numerous presentations throughout England, including formal lectures exploring how communities still affected by Trans-Atlantic slavery can strive for reconciliation and a more just and peaceful world.¹⁷

My selection as the Bray Lecturer provided an ideal opportunity to pursue a postcolonial reading of a Pauline text in two cultural contexts dramatically influenced by colonial and postcolonial realities. The itinerary of the lectureship permitted me to retrace geographically and theologically parts of the triangular route of slavery. Furthermore, the

¹⁵ The inaugural Bray Lecturer was Gerald West of the University of Natal in South Africa. He visited India and the United Kingdom in 2005. I am grateful for the generous support of USPG, SPCK, and the Anglican Communion that facilitated my travel, research, and lectures. For the history of USPG and SPCK, consult Daniel O'Connor et al., *Three Centuries of Mission: The United Society for the Propagation of the Gospel 1701–2000* (London: Continuum, 2000). The Bray Lectures are a noteworthy effort by USPG to address its role in promoting a “colonial” Christianity in its early years. In this regard, USPG is facilitating contemporary conversations for justice and reconciliation.

¹⁶ W. E. B. Du Bois expatriated to Ghana and provided important inspiration and counsel to Kwame Nkrumah. Both Du Bois and Nkrumah were passionate advocates of African nationalism and staunch critics of European colonialism. Consult David Birmingham, *Kwame Nkrumah: The Father of African Nationalism* (rev. ed. Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, 1998), 95.

¹⁷ I delivered formal lectures at Kings College, London; Ripon College, Cuddesdon; The Queen's Foundation for Ecumenical Theological Education, Birmingham; York University; and Manchester Cathedral. I appreciate the hospitality I received at each of these locations.

slave castles in Ghana—those dark, suffocating dungeons designed to brutalize the bodies and spirits of their inhabitants—have indelibly influenced my exegetical and theological agenda.

PAUL AND REPARATIONS FOR SLAVERY

Social activists and scholars in many disciplines are intensely debating reparations for slavery.¹⁸ While some religious leaders and theologians have added their voices to this debate, I am not aware of many overtly exegetical approaches to this important conversation.¹⁹ In the Bray Lectures, I wanted to address the lack of exegetical resources concerning reparations for slavery.

My initial thinking about reparations followed this logic: Trans-Atlantic slavery inflicted cultural, economic, and psychic wounds upon the African continent and the African Diaspora. The African continent and Diaspora have been hemorrhaging ever since. In spite of this massive bleeding, African people the world over have transformed every aspect of global culture, from commerce to cuisine. As a Ghanaian clergy said to me in Ghana during the Bray Lectures, “The whole world has been made rich by Africa.”

Yet to ignore conversations about reparations is akin to enjoying the riches from people of African descent, while simultaneously allowing those people to bleed profusely from the wounds of slavery. To continue with the metaphor, reconciliation is often depicted as an embrace or

¹⁸ For example, in political science and legal studies, Randall Robinson, *The Debt: What America Owes to Blacks* (New York: Plume, 2000), and Roy L. Brooks, *Atonement and Forgiveness: A New Model for Black Reparations* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004); in sociology and cultural studies, Winbush, *Should America Pay?*; in philosophy, Janna Thompson, *Taking Responsibility for the Past: Reparation and Historical Justice* (Polity: Cambridge, 2002).

¹⁹ For a compelling exposition of the South African Truth and Reconciliation process in the 1990s, which involved reparations, consult Desmond Tutu, *No Future without Forgiveness* (New York: Image, 1999). For a discussion of reparations from the perspectives of pastoral theology and Old Testament exegesis, consult Homer U. Ashby, Jr., *Our Home Is Over Jordan: A Black Pastoral Theology* (St. Louis: Chalice, 2003), 134–40. For a rationale for reparations from the perspective of ethics and critical race theory, consult Jennifer Harvey, “Race and Reparations: The Material Logics of White Supremacy,” in *Disrupting White Supremacy from Within: White People on What We Need to Do* (ed. Jennifer Harvey, Karin A. Case, and Robin Hawley Gorsline; Cleveland: Pilgrim, 2004), 91–122.

hug that overcomes hostility. But hugging a person bleeding profusely, without attending to the gaping wound, is more a kiss of death than a hug to end hostility.

Just as reconciliation is a complex process that must involve reparations, so too reparations is a complex term with many nuances. Opinions about the meanings and possible administrations of reparations are wide-ranging. For instance, Molefi Asante, a progenitor of contemporary African-centered scholarship, maintains that there should be four dimensions of reparations: the moral, the legal, the economic, and the political.²⁰ While a discussion of the multiple dimensions of reparations will not detain us now, there is a growing consensus among some scholars and activists that reparations should involve financial compensation for African people or institutions. Since chattel slavery reaped untold *economic* profits for many Europeans and Americans, it seems only just that the currency of reparations should also be at least partly economic.

Nevertheless, slavery exacted from African people not only an economic toll but also a psychic toll. In that regard, British pounds and U.S. dollars alone will be insufficient to redress the wrong. In my research and reflection about reparations, I left open the question of the form of reparations. Yet I have grown increasingly convinced that without reparations there will be no genuine, abiding reconciliation among those estranged by the violence of Trans-Atlantic slavery.

Thus, I initially set out to offer a postcolonial reading of a Pauline text that would support the cause of international reparations for persons affected by slavery. I soon discovered, however, that my desire was premature. It began to occur to me how uncomfortable some people were with even the mention of reparations.

As I pondered the cultural discomfort that even the term “reparations” can create, another question occurred to me: If we can barely mention the term “reparations” in polite, cultural conversations, let alone seriously entertain it as a socio-economic reality, how will reparations ever come to pass? At this point, I altered my exegetical agenda for the Bray Lectures. No longer would I read a Pauline text to address directly the issue of reparations. Instead, I would read a Pauline text

²⁰ Molefi Kete Asante, “The African American Warrant for Reparations: The Crime of European Enslavement of Africans and Its Consequences,” in *Should America Pay? Slavery and Raging Debates on Reparations* (ed. Raymond A. Winbush; New York: Amistad, 2003), 4.

to discern why it is so difficult even to have the conversation about reparations in the first place, especially in cross-cultural settings. How might Pauline exegesis create the conditions for a much-needed conversation about the dimensions of racial reconciliation in the twenty-first century?

A POSTCOLONIAL APPROACH TO 2 CORINTHIANS 3:12–18

In many Christian conversations about reconciliation, 2 Cor 5:17–21 is a touchstone text, especially v. 19: “In Christ God was reconciling the world to [God’s] self.” Christian proponents of reconciliation are right to make 2 Cor 5:17–21 central. Yet it occurred to me that conversations about 2 Cor 5 are premature without sustained attention to 2 Cor 3, especially vv. 12–18.

In 2 Cor 3, Paul plumbs the depths of the challenges facing the Corinthian congregation and the world. The deeper issue in 2 Corinthians is epistemology, how we know and think.²¹ To investigate epistemology is to ask this question: What characteristics allow us to know truth from falsehood? As I grappled afresh with 2 Corinthians, Paul seemed to be saying that the world will never arrive at truth or reconciliation without a transformation in our way of knowing and thinking. Before there can be a new world, there must be new ways of thinking about the world. Second Corinthians 3 was and is a call for repentance—an apocalyptic action that transforms our thinking.

In 2 Cor 3:12–18, Paul identifies the epistemological obstacle that must be removed: “the veil”! The veil distorts how we know and obscures right perceptions of the world. Paul’s interpretation of the veil is filled with exegetical intricacies. God has ushered in a new moment in salvation history.²² This new era, whose chief architect is Jesus Christ,

²¹ In a classic essay, J. Louis Martyn argues that epistemology is a fundamental concern in 2 Corinthians. According to Martyn, Paul urges the Corinthians to join him in a new way of knowing God’s actions (“Epistemology at the Turn of the Ages,” in *Theological Issues in the Letters of Paul* [Nashville: Abingdon, 1997], 89–110).

²² In 2 Cor 3:6, 14, Paul uses the word *διαθήκη*, which is normally translated “covenant.” By “covenant,” Paul seems to mean something like “era.” He distinguishes between the ministry of the old era and the new era. The Christ event (i.e., the life, death, resurrection, and impending return of Jesus Christ) is the dividing line between these eras. The Scripture of Judaism is still an important feature within the new era. However, Paul reads that Scripture in a new way, namely, through his experience with Jesus Christ.

is both similar and dissimilar to the old era, whose chief architect was Moses. Both the old and new eras reflect God's glory. Yet there is a crucial distinction between the old and new eras. The old era actually places a veil over people's thinking. A relationship with Jesus Christ removes the obscuring veil and bestows upon persons a radically new orientation. With the veil removed, people are able to detect God's surprising plans.

What does the veil in 2 Cor 3 have to do with contemporary reconciliation among people still affected by Trans-Atlantic slavery? An answer emerged as I read 2 Cor 3 from the contextual framework of my trip to Ghana in the fall of 2006. I led a seminar for scholars and clergy at St. Nicholas Seminary, an Anglican Theological School, in Cape Coast, Ghana. On the Thursday night before that Friday seminar, I read again 2 Cor 3:12–18, the principal text for the seminar, and I also read again the text upon which that passage is predicated, Exod 34.

Exodus 34 concludes a pivotal three-chapter section. In Exod 32, Israel commits idolatry, thus provoking God's fierce judgment. In Exod 33, Moses pleads with God to restore God's presence to Israel, for without God's presence, Israel would cease to be. God promises to allow God's face to go with Israel, but God refuses to allow Moses to see God's face. In Exod 34, God renews the covenant with Israel on Mount Sinai. At the end of the covenant renewal, there is a mysterious reference to a veil that Moses places on his face in Exod 34:29–35. Moses' direct encounter with God's transcendence left Moses' face shining. Thus, when speaking with the people after this divine encounter, Moses put the veil on. Moses then took the veil off when he spoke to God.

Scholars debate the significance of the veil. For instance, Walter Brueggemann suggests that the veil might be a protection for Israel or an instrument to prevent God's glory from being profaned by contact with masses of people.²³ Thus, the veil appears to fulfill some positive or at least protective purpose. However, as Paul interprets Exod 34 in 2 Cor 3:12–18, this veil is not positive. Instead, the veil prohibits the proper perception of reality. It is an instrument of concealment. Moses uses the veil to hide from people his fading glory, which for Paul signals the inability of the old era to provide ultimate life. Therefore, when Paul interpreted Exod 34 in his context, the veil assumed new, negative significance.

²³ Walter Brueggemann, *The Book of Exodus in New Interpreter's Bible*, vol. I (Nashville: Abingdon, 1994), 953.

On that warm Ghanaian night, I, too, began to realize that the veil was problematic and was hiding something. The veil was hiding the horrific colonial violence that Exodus places in the mouth of God. In Exod 34, the covenant is renewed, but at the expense of indigenous people. There had been a veil on my mind in previous engagements with Exod 34. When I read Exod 34 in a Ghanaian context, this text was no longer an innocent affirmation of covenant renewal. In Ghana, a country only fifty years removed from the bondage of British colonialism, Exod 34:11–16 arrested my attention.

In the seminar with my Ghanaian colleagues, I played “jazz” with the scriptures, inserting different ethnic or tribal names in Exod 34:11–16. My “improvisation” revealed how dangerous this text could be:

Observe what I the God of colonial violence and greed command you—my colonial British missionaries to the Gold Coast of Africa. As you invade the Gold Coast to enslave the people and pillage their resources, I will drive out before you the Akan, and the Fante, and the Ga, and the Ewe, and the Mossi, and the Yoruba...

Tear down their altars of African Traditional Religion where they have met the Great God for centuries; cut down their sacred poles where they have named and dedicated their children to the Great God and raised their families in righteousness.

And in the name of colonial religion, refer to their sacred traditions as “fetishes,” and call those dark people “pagans.” Even though those indigenous Africans were the architects of religion and knew the Great God millennia before the Christian religion was formulated, convince them that their sacred traditions are demonic rituals.

My improvisational reading revealed that for indigenous West Africans, Exodus 34 could be a “text of terror,”²⁴ which employs “a theological justification in order to serve the vested [and violent] interest of a particular ethnic/racial group.”²⁵ Indeed, religious faithfulness in Exod 34 required the destruction of indigenous peoples. My point was not to impugn Moses or by extension to foster contemporary anti-Judaism. My aim was to unmask the colonial violence at the center of Exod 34. Paul in the first century and the twenty-first century African participants in my seminar had a strong premonition that the veil posed a serious problem.

²⁴ Phyllis Trible, *Texts of Terror: Literary-Feminist Readings of Biblical Narratives* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1984).

²⁵ Cain Hope Felder, “Race, Racism, and the Biblical Narratives,” in *Stony the Road We Trod: African American Biblical Interpretation* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1991), 128–29.

The veil prevents us from perceiving reality properly. This lack of proper perception has created the conditions for cultural chauvinism and violence. The veil is not a cloth fabric for the face. It is a philosophy that cloaks the mind. Until we lift the veil in our contemporary cultural conversations, we cannot have probing conversations about reparations and genuine racial reconciliation. If religious communities and social activists want to be ambassadors of justice, they must lift the veil from their own attitudes and actions. Then, with sharpened moral perception, these religious communities and social activists will be empowered to guide global conversations about justice and reconciliation.

Spiritual Inspiration from W. E. B. Du Bois

My emphasis on the veil as an instrument of oppression seemed especially appropriate in a Ghanaian context. W. E. B. Du Bois—the distinguished African American scholar who emigrated to Ghana and died there in 1963—had likened the psychic and social oppression of African Americans to a “veil” in his classic work *The Souls of Black Folk*. This veil prevented African Americans from accurately perceiving who they are, leaving them instead with the distorted self-images propagated by white racism. Scholars suggest that Du Bois constructed the image of the veil partly from Paul’s words about seeing through a glass dimly in 1 Cor 13:12 and partly from the veil of the Tabernacle in Exod 26:33.²⁶ Du Bois believed that the veil would have to be destroyed or transcended in order for African Americans to achieve the psychic and social wholeness that allowed them to integrate their “Negro” identity with their “American” identity.²⁷

Interestingly, during my stay in Ghana for the Bray Lectures, the first historical site my tour guide arranged for me to visit was Du Bois’s home in Accra. This visit occurred two days before the seminar at St. Nicholas Seminary discussed above. As I walked through Du Bois’s house, sat in his study, and knelt at his grave outside his home,

²⁶ For further discussion of the “veil” in Du Bois’s work, consult Stanley Brodwin, “The Veil Transcended: Form and Meaning in W. E. B. Du Bois’ ‘The Souls of Black Folk,’” *Journal of Black Studies* 2 (March 1972): 303–21. Also, consult Vincent L. Wimbush, “‘We Will Make Our Own Future Text’: An Alternate Orientation to Interpretation,” in *True to Our Native Land: An African American New Testament Commentary* (ed. Brian K. Blount; Minneapolis: Fortress, 2007), 44–47.

²⁷ W. E. B. Du Bois, *The Souls of Black Folk* (Chicago: A. C. McClurg and Co., 1903; repr., New York: Dover, 1994), 2.

I began a “postcolonial conversation” with his spirit. My thoughts went like this:

Dr. Du Bois, you turned, at least in part, to the Apostle Paul for a powerful image describing the oppression of African Americans—the veil. In spite of the courageous, pioneering work of you and other freedom fighters, the veil still exists. With your blessing, I want to explore another Pauline text dealing with the veil, with the hopes that these lectures in Ghana and England will move us closer to the final removal of the veil.

As I shared these thoughts at Du Bois’s grave, with tears falling from my eyes, I felt a numinous presence surrounding me. I believe it was Du Bois’s spirit blessing my efforts to wrestle, once again, with the Apostle Paul and with the veil for the sake of liberty and justice for all, and especially for all African Americans. Inspired by this “visitation” with Du Bois, I set out in my lectures and seminars to understand afresh the nature or “texture” of the veil.

The “Fabric” of Colonialism

There are at least two interlocking “fabrics” that comprise the veil. As I intimated above, the first fabric of the veil is colonialism and neo-colonialism. Indeed, “colonial” Christianity was a primary ideological pillar of Trans-Atlantic slavery.

The collusion of colonial Christianity and slavery became viscerally real to me as I visited the Ghanaian slave dungeons in Cape Coast and Elmina. In Cape Coast, the male slave dungeon was literally beneath the chapel in which Europeans were holding their worship services. In Elmina, the slave auction block was literally beneath the chapel for worship. Colonial Christianity, along with its hegemonic biblical hermeneutics, was propped up by the backs and bones of enslaved Africans.

Religious organizations such as USPG should be commended for inviting various contemporary communities to ponder the diverse roles of Christianity in the support and abolition of chattel slavery. Yet reconciliation will never come unless we, in the words of the ethicist Barbara Holmes, move beyond “polite and reserved academic discourses.”²⁸ According to Holmes, such “discourses are inappropriate responses to genocide.”²⁹ Thus, as we address the lasting legacies of

²⁸ Barbara A. Holmes, *Race and the Cosmos: An Invitation to View the World Differently* (Harrisburg: Trinity Press International, 2002), 76.

²⁹ *Ibid.*

the colonial genocide of Trans-Atlantic slavery, we cannot only speak politely about USPG's mark on contemporary conversations. We also must risk being impolite and remember that USPG's historical antecedent, the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel (SPG), marked people in the eighteenth century in a much more infamous way. Slave holders associated with SPG branded the mark "Society" into the skin of the slaves they owned in the Caribbean.³⁰ An eighteenth century African slave on that *Christian-sponsored*, Caribbean plantation could have uttered words from another Pauline text: "I carry the marks of Jesus branded on my body" (Gal 6:17). Indeed, some colonial slave holders transformed the symbolic "branding" of Jesus into an excruciatingly literal practice. In the name of Jesus, Christian missionaries "marked," maimed, and murdered countless Africans.³¹

The historian Christopher Brown has examined the role of Anglo-American religious groups, such as the Quakers and Evangelical Anglicans, in the anti-slavery movement.³² Yet Brown also reminds us that many Anglo-American Christians condemned slavery, while rarely, if ever, questioning the colonialism and empire-building that inflicted another kind of violence on the African continent and Diaspora.

Additionally, it must be noted that neo-colonialism is alive and well and being fostered by policies implemented by nations such as the United States. One example substantiates the claim. In Ghana, in order to pay their loans from international banks, local farmers must charge higher prices for their rice than the cheaper rice imported from the U.S. Consequently, Ghanaians tend to buy rice from the U.S. rather than from their own farmers. When I addressed a group of clergy in Ghana, they spoke passionately about how these trade policies were bringing slow but certain economic and physical death to their communities. For these clergy eager to resist neo-colonial policies and practices, abstract musings about Pauline themes such as "death" and "resurrection" were meaningless. So many Ghanaians continue to die. No longer are

³⁰ Hochschild, *Bury the Chains*, 67–68.

³¹ For poignant analyses of the often ignored colonial violence against black women, consult Traci C. West, "Spirit-Colonizing Violations: Racism, Sexual Violence and Black American Women," in *Remembering Conquest: Feminist/Womanist Perspectives on Religion, Colonization, and Sexual Violence* (ed. Nantawan Boonprasat Lewis and Marie M. Fortune; New York: Haworth, 1999), 19–30; and Katie G. Cannon, "Sexing Black Women: Liberation from the Prisonhouse of Anatomical Authority," in *Loving the Body: Black Religious Studies and the Erotic* (ed. Anthony B. Pinn and Dwight N. Hopkins; New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 11–30.

³² Brown, *Moral Capital: Foundations of British Abolitionism*, 333–450.

they dying in violent forced slave marches to the Ghanaian coast or in the hulls of slave ships. Now, Ghanaians die from a lack of economic development. The slower economic development in Ghana—and in many other places around the globe formerly colonized by Europeans and North Americans—is related, in large measure, to the economic despondency and scarcity of social infrastructures (e.g., potable water, healthcare, sufficient roads and schools) left in the wake of Trans-Atlantic slavery and colonialism. Thus, in Ghana, a postcolonial approach to “resurrection” that overcomes “death” must take into account practical, tangible realities like the price of rice.

The “Fabric” of Fundamentalism

In addition to colonialism, there is another interlocking “fabric” from which the ideological veil has been woven: fundamentalism. Fundamentalism also obscures proper perceptions and poses a serious threat to racial reconciliation.³³ When I speak of fundamentalism, I am not identifying a particular segment within a religious community. Rather I mean an overall approach to reality that transforms *culturally-conditioned* criteria for truth and relevance into *universal criteria*. Furthermore, fundamentalism vigorously and, sometimes, violently compels acceptance of those criteria. Fundamentalism “replaces the awesome depth of Mystery with a flat surface of barren forms,”³⁴ and it tends to demonize diversity and ambiguity. While some scholars locate the formal emergence of fundamentalism in the late nineteenth century, the veil of fundamentalism had fallen over the minds of many a long time before that. Indeed, one could argue that fundamentalism provided ideological support for colonialism, and that colonialism was the political embodiment of fundamentalism.

The Fabric of 2 Corinthians 3

Fundamentalism does not restrict itself to *religious* doctrines. It can subsume *cultural philosophies* such as “white privilege” and invest them with a divine mandate. Thus, even after the abolition of the slave trade

³³ For a more detailed discussion of fundamentalism, consult James Barr, *Fundamentalism* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1977); Karen Armstrong, *The Battle for God: A History of Fundamentalism* (New York: Ballantine, 2000); and Martyn Percy and Ian Jones, eds., *Fundamentalism: Church and Society* (London: SPCK, 2002).

³⁴ Patrick Laude, “An Eternal Perfume,” *Parabola: The Search for Meaning* 30 (Winter 2005): 7.

and emancipation from slavery, white Christian missionaries felt “called by God” to enlighten and evangelize the “dark natives” in Africa and Asia. This historical collusion between fundamentalism and colonialism reveals the fine line between mutually edifying intercultural interaction and a patronizing “white man’s burden” to civilize and “Christianize” the world.

Given my apprehension about fundamentalism, my emphasis on 2 Cor 3:12–18 could seem strange. This passage appears to support a kind of fundamentalism, where Paul seeks to flatten the mystery of his ancestral religion, Judaism, in the name of making everyone a “Christian.” In some sense, Paul does to Judaism what later Christian missionaries did to African Traditional Religion: deny its enduring validity. Thus, at the very point where Paul assists us in lifting the veil of colonialism, he seemingly lowers the veil of fundamentalism further upon our minds.

However, 2 Cor 3:16–17 might provide a way forward. Verse 16 makes Jesus Christ central to the removing of the veil. But if the veil is raised only through Jesus Christ, then this passage becomes an instrument of fundamentalism, where only “Christians” have proper perception. Does Paul in v. 17 appeal to the language of the Spirit and, in so doing, unwittingly provide a way to avoid the dangers of fundamentalism? “Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom.” Just when it appears that this text has clearly marked the boundaries of religious insiders and outsiders, this text moves into the boundary-transcending territory of the Spirit.

Jesus said that the Spirit blows where it wills (John 3:8). By invoking God’s Spirit in 2 Cor 3:17, this text suggests that the Spirit’s ultimate concern is not partisanship on the basis of religious group identity. Rather the Spirit’s ultimate concern is the last word in the Greek text and English translation of 2 Cor 3:17: ἐλευθερία or “freedom.” Where the Spirit is, there is *freedom*, and where *freedom* is, there is the Spirit. Thus, attempts to restrict sacred truth to any one religious scheme create inhospitable conditions for the Sacred Spirit who wants to inspire freedom and flourishing for the creation and all its inhabitants. Undoubtedly, for Paul, the phrase “Spirit of the Lord” possessed overt Christological meaning. For him, the Lord is Christ. Yet the Septuagint reveals that the term “Lord” (κύριος) is sufficiently flexible to include both a broader reference to God and a more specific reference to Jesus Christ.

As a Christian, I share Paul’s belief that the Lord is Christ. Nevertheless, I do not want to be limited by that Christological understanding. Said differently, as a Christian, I believe that in Jesus Christ I

have all the sacred truth I can stand, but I do not have all the sacred truth there is. Others also have sacred truth, for example, those who practice African Traditional Religion or seek right relationships with God through the Torah. By linking with and learning from them, we all are enriched.

In one of my seminars in Ghana, an African Anglican clergy welcomed my attempt to loose the Spirit in 2 Cor 3:17 from a dogmatic Christo-centrism. He rightly sensed that my interpretation represented an embrace of religious pluralism. He is a Christian. His wife is a Muslim. In addition to their devotion to their respective religious traditions of Christianity and Islam, they are also seeking God through various approaches in African Traditional Religion. He has grown weary of neo-colonial, dogmatic Christianity that disparages the religious validity of other approaches to the sacred. Instead, he and his family are seeking approaches to religion that honor the particularities of various religious traditions, while acknowledging the complexity and ambiguity of the desire to grasp, or to be grasped by, the sacred.

CONTINUING THE CONVERSATION

The time has come to lift the veil—the veil of colonialism and fundamentalism. My reading of 2 Cor 3:12–18 can be refined, but I am energized about the possibility of engaging Pauline texts for their assistance in the demanding work of contemporary racial reconciliation. My current exploration has revealed several areas for further investigation, which I present as questions:

1. Given the interest in reconciliation in Paul's letters (e.g., Rom 5:10–11; 2 Cor 5:18–19; Eph 2:16; Col 1:20–22), how should Trans-Atlantic slavery influence contemporary exegetical and theological reflection about restorative justice (e.g., reparations), healing, forgiveness, and reconciliation?
2. How can postcolonial readings of the inter-ethnic dialogue in Paul's letters foster more probing conversations about the construction of ethnic identity in diverse twenty-first century contexts? Furthermore, to what degree are the similarities and differences in the understanding of ethnic and racial identity among Ghanaian, British, and U.S. audiences related to the experiences of slavery and colonialism, and how do these similarities and differences impact exegesis?³⁵

³⁵ Michael Gomez, a historian of African Diasporic cultures, argues that certain West African understandings of "ethnicity" were replaced by the concept of "race" among enslaved African Americans. West African societies had (and still have) a

3. Given Paul's interest in "epistemology" and divine revelation, how can postcolonial readings of such themes address and correct the false perceptions perpetuated by white racism and other forms of xenophobia?

According to Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza:

Truth is not...a process of discovering the hidden or forcing into the open a divine that is buried. Rather, truth is a historical process of public deliberation for the creation of a radical democratic equality for every wo/man in the global village...A conception of "truth" in this sense comes close to the biblical notion of "doing the truth," a truth that "will set you free."³⁶

Many colonial readings of Paul's letters facilitated the enslavement of millions of Africans. I believe that emerging postcolonial readings of those same letters can assist the heirs of the enslaved and of the enslavers in their quest for reconciliation. Let it be so in the name of that Spirit that brings ἐλευθερία—freedom!

robust appreciation for ethnic diversity. This diversity involved the veneration of different ethnic deities, even though many African ethnic groups still believed in the one Great God who had created the universe. In order to frustrate communication and quell the threat of slave revolts, slave traders often mixed West African ethnic groups. Consequently, some ethnic customs and beliefs faded, including the beliefs in certain lesser ethnic deities. While the deities of various West African ethnic groups may have "died" in the middle passage of Trans-Atlantic slavery, there arose among the enslaved a pan-African understanding of God that placed the survival of *black* people atop the religious agenda. Hence, these enslaved people no longer identified themselves according to their ethnic heritage but rather by their "racial" heritage (e.g., black physical features). Thus, for ruling, white elites, "race" was a social construction for the perpetuation of "white privilege." For enslaved African Americans, "race" was a social construction to facilitate the survival of a people. This historical process partly explains why "race" is a cherished, albeit complex, concept among African Americans. By contrast, while colonial Great Britain was once the principal slave-trading empire, Britain did not experience the large influx of Africans that was more typical in the Caribbean and the United States. Consequently, notions of "race" developed very differently in Britain, even though British colonialism often resulted in the "white" domination of "dark" indigenous peoples. For further discussion, consult Michael A. Gomez, "The Preacher-Kings: W. E. B. Du Bois Revisited," in *African Americans and the Bible: Sacred Texts and Social Textures* (ed. Vincent L. Wimbush; New York: Continuum, 2000), 503–5; and Fenton, *Ethnicity*, 40–42, 48–50. For a similar argument about the social construction of "race" among Asian people as a result of their colonial oppression, consult Kwok Pui-lan, *Postcolonial Imagination and Feminist Theology* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2005), 40.

³⁶ Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, *Rhetoric and Ethic: The Politics of Biblical Studies* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1999), 192–93.

DIE JUDENFRAGE AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF
ANCIENT JUDAISM: TOWARD A FOREGROUNDING
OF THE BACKGROUNDS APPROACH
TO EARLY CHRISTIANITY*

Todd Penner

Within the history of the peoples of Europe the history of the Jews is not treated as circumstantially as their intervention in European affairs would actually merit, because within this history they are experienced as a sort of disease, and anomaly, and no one wants to put a disease on the same level as normal life—Ludwig Wittgenstein (1931)¹

In his seminal study of the modern ideological character of early Christian historical inquiry, Jonathan Z. Smith notes how “comparison provides the means by which *we* ‘re-vision’ phenomena as *our* data in order to solve *our* theoretical problems.”² Smith is aware of the role

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¹ Translation taken from Edward T. Oakes, *German Essays on Religion* (The German Library 54; New York: Continuum, 1994), 217.

² Jonathan Z. Smith, *Drudgery Divine: On the Comparison of Early Christianities and the Religions of Antiquity* (Chicago Studies in the History of Judaism; Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990), 52 (emphasis in original); cf. 51, 115.

that the observer performs in drawing out similarities and highlighting differences, which are inherent to the classification system used by modern scholarship rather than intrinsic to the historical data itself. That scholars of ancient history have been influenced in their study by the political and cultural currents of their time period would seem to be such a banal observation that it “goes without saying.” Yet it is surprising how little consideration is given to this insight with respect to the methods and results of past scholarship.

In this essay I am especially concerned with modern concepts and the colonial context of nationalism and racism, particularly as these pertain to the development of methods for analyzing and classifying Judaism in the past from within a decidedly Christian analytic. Aside from Shawn Kelley’s and Susannah Heschel’s crucial studies on the structural racism that undergirded the formation of earliest scholarship on incipient Christianity and Second Temple Judaism, relatively few scholars have explored the racializing edge of the foundational period of biblical criticism.³ Scholars have engaged the issue of anti-Judaism or even anti-Semitism in the research on early Christianity. For instance, in the assessment of the ethics and eschatology of post-Shoah biblical criticism, scholars such as W. D. Davies and after him E. P. Sanders sought to rectify the negative image of Jews and Judaism that emerged in the biblical scholarship of an earlier era. Sanders’s groundbreaking work picked up on G. F. Moore’s agenda of the early 1920s,⁴ attempting to eradicate surprisingly enduring and entrenched notions with respect to Palestinian and Rabbinic Judaism.⁵ Both Davies

³ Shawn Kelley, *Racializing Jesus: Race, Ideology and the Formation of Modern Biblical Scholarship* (New York: Routledge, 2002); and Susannah Heschel, *Abraham Geiger and the Jewish Jesus* (Chicago Studies in the History of Judaism; Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988). See also the important study by Uriel Tal, *Christians and Jews in Germany: Religion, Politics, and Ideology in the Second Reich, 1870–1914* (trans. N. J. Jacobs; Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1975). Tal’s monograph, originally published in Hebrew in 1969, offers a richly nuanced analysis of the intersection of historical study with cultural and social ideologies of the time period.

⁴ E. P. Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism: A Comparison of Patterns of Religion* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1977), 33–59; and George Foot Moore, “Christian Writers on Judaism,” *HTR* 14 (1921): 197–254.

⁵ Moore’s main target was Ferdinand Weber, whose 1880 work, entitled *The System of Old Synagogue Palestinian Theology*, had proved formative for German scholarship on early Christian history. Cf. Ferdinand Weber, *System der altsynagogalen Palästinischen Theologie aus Targum, Midrasch und Talmud* (ed. F. Delitzsch and G. Schnedermann; Leipzig: Dörffling & Franke, 1880). On the influential nature of Weber’s assessment, see Joseph B. Tyson, *Luke, Judaism, and the Scholars: Critical Approaches to Luke-Acts* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1999), 1–11, as well as the treatment in Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 33–59.

and Sanders repudiated the older German, Protestant constructions of a Judaism entrenched in legalistic Torah observance, which was then fundamentally challenged and abrogated by the message of Jesus and the early church. They thus anticipated the work by Daniel Boyarin and (then later) Mark Nanos, both of whom, albeit in differing ways, have sought to reconnect Paul more closely with his Jewish cultural, social, and religious contexts in meaningfully *Jewish* ways.⁶ This trend in early Christian—and particularly Pauline—scholarship is well known. Still, what strikes me as a missing element in this conversation is that scholars criticizing the earlier period of historical study focused (and continue to do so) almost exclusively on theological grounds. The departure in the reassessment of Paul is often located in altered theological categories, conceptions, and classifications. The fundamental substructure of method with respect to studying the past, however, continues essentially unchanged. While it is true that scholars such as Sanders reconfigured the conceptual landscape of both ancient Jewish and Pauline study by virtue of shifting and expanding the basis for comparison of the two entities, the actual assumptions bolstering the foundation of that comparative enterprise remained largely unexamined and in place. If this is indeed the case, it might well be queried just how far modern scholarship has actually progressed beyond the assessments of nineteenth-century scholars of early Christianity.

By contrast, however, National Socialist interpretation of early Christian history and theology has received systematic cultural and social assessment of its historical reconstructive practices. The case of Walter Grundmann is a good example. In his attempts to eradicate the influence of Judaism on German religious and cultural life, Grundmann, who had explicit ties to the German National Social movement, offered highly problematic constructions of the historical Jesus.⁷ Borrowing a theme articulated earlier in the widely read and

⁶ See Daniel R. Langton's helpful summary of the role these two Jewish scholars have played in contemporary scholarship on Paul: "The Myth of the 'Traditional View of Paul' and the Role of the Apostle in Modern Jewish-Christian Polemics," *JSN* 28 (2005): 69–104 (99–103 on Nanos); and "Modern Jewish Identity and the Apostle Paul: Pauline Studies as an Intra-Jewish Ideological Battleground," *JSN* 28 (2005): 217–58 (252–56 on Boyarin).

⁷ Susannah Heschel, "Nazifying Christian Theology: Walter Grundmann and the Institute for the Study and Eradication of Jewish Influence on German Church Life," *CH* 63 (1994): 587–605. See also her "Theological Bulimia: Christianity and Dejudaization," in *After the Passion Is Gone: American Religious Consequences* (ed. J. S. Landres and M. Berenbaum; New York: Altamira, 2004), 177–92.

popular study by Houston Stuart Chamberlain (1899),⁸ Grundmann promoted the notion that Jesus was not a Jew, based on an argument that Galilee, Jesus' home, was Gentile in its fundamental orientation.⁹ The explicit Aryanization of Jesus is readily evident in both Chamberlain's work and in Grundmann's project at the "Institute for the Study and Eradication of Jewish Influence on the German Church/Religious Life" or the "Eisenach Dejudaization Institute."¹⁰

Grundmann's work has resurfaced more recently in a variety of contexts, all of which seek the repudiation of the kind of anti-Semitic history of New Testament scholarship that still haunts the modern scholarly intellectual (and cultural) landscape.¹¹ Maurice Casey brings the issue to a head in his provocative comment that Grundmann should be read as a final product of the kind of work that Rudolf Bultmann and others were doing with respect to the history of the gospel tradition.¹²

⁸ Houston Stewart Chamberlain, *Foundations of the Nineteenth Century* (2 vols.; trans. J. Lees; Munich: F. Bruckmann, 1911), esp. 1:200–13. See the summary of Chamberlain's highly influential position in Ritchie Robertson, *The 'Jewish Question' in German Literature 1749–1939: Emancipation and Its Discontents* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 169–72.

⁹ Walter Grundmann, *Jesus der Galiläer und das Judentum* (Leipzig: G. Wigand, 1940). Grundmann's work on the Hellenists in earliest Christianity, which became a *locus classicus* in terms of establishing the argument that the Hellenists formed the bridge between Jesus and Paul through their establishment of the community in Antioch, also played into this broader Aryanization scheme (cf. "Das Problem des hellenistischen Christentums innerhalb der Jerusalemer Urgemeinde," *ZNW* 38 [1939]: 45–73). Recently, Roland Deines has sought to trace out a "genealogy" of Grundmann's position on Galilee in order to create a more complex (and sympathetic) portrait of the disputed critic ("Jesus der Galiläer: Traditionsgeschichte und Genese eines antisemitischen Konstrukts bei Walter Grundmann," in *Walter Grundmann: Ein Neutestamentler im Dritten Reich* [ed. R. Deines, V. Leppin, and K.-W. Niebuhr; AKT 21; Leipzig: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 2007], 43–131).

¹⁰ See Heschel, "Nazifying Christian Theology," 588; and idem, "When Jesus Was an Aryan: The Protestant Church and Antisemitic Propaganda," in *Betrayal: German Churches and the Holocaust* (ed. R. P. Ericksen and S. Heschel; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1999), 68–89.

¹¹ See, for instance, Halvor Moxnes, "Jesus the Jew: Dilemmas of Interpretation," in *Fair Play: Diversity and Conflicts in Early Christianity; Essays in Honour of Heikki Räsänen* (ed. I. Dunderburg, C. Tuckett, and K. Syreeni; NovTSup 103; Leiden: Brill, 2002), esp. 85–89. Cf. Bernard M. Levinson and Douglas Dance, "The Metamorphosis of Law into Gospel: Gerhard von Rad's Attempt to Reclaim the Old Testament for the Church," in *Recht und Ethik im Alten Testament* (ed. B. M. Levinson and E. Otto with W. Dietrich; ATM 13; Munster: LIT, 2004), 83–110 (esp. 96–97, 99–100).

¹² Maurice Casey, "Who's Afraid of Jesus Christ? Some Comments on Attempts to Write a Life of Jesus," in *Writing History, Constructing Religion* (ed. J. Crossley and C. Karner; London: Ashgate, 2005), 129–46 (esp. 130–34). In this view, for instance, Bultmann's source-critical and redaction-critical approach to the Synoptic Gospels functioned to separate Jesus from Judaism, making the Jewish problem, in effect, a fundamental component of the Synoptic Problem—the wisdom *logia* are attributed

Casey designates this aspect as the “social function” of the “radical criticism” that Bultmann was engaged in, wherein it was ensured that “out from under the synoptic Gospels there could never crawl a Jewish man.”¹³ Much of this current trade on Grundmann’s legacy is linked with a cultivation of the Jewish dimensions of earliest Christianity and the figure of Jesus. Yet the observation by William Arnal, in his essay on Judaism as a “cipher” in modern Jesus scholarship, offers an important caveat: in many cases such reassessment of “Jesus the Jew serves as a way to reclaim Christianity from complicity in the Holocaust; even to insulate it from this complicity...show[ing] that what Christianity is *not*, at its core, is anti-Jewish or anti-Semitic.”¹⁴

Thus, the focus on scholars who “dejudaized” Jesus and early Christianity becomes, in some cases at least, a means of establishing a modern scholarly imaginary—a way of displacing more problematic aspects of current methods and models by focusing on a hideously shaped “alter ego.”¹⁵ In other words, one cannot deny the problematic nature of

to the historical Jesus, but the prophetic and apocalyptic materials are considered to be Jewish and thus later additions by the church (cf. Rudolf Bultmann, *The History of the Synoptic Tradition* [trans. J. Marsh; rev. ed.; San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1963], 108–30). Thus, whereas Grundmann de-Judaized Jesus geographically, Bultmann did so textually through the conceptual stratification and consequent filtration of a more “original” and “authentic” Synoptic Jesus tradition (cf. Kelley, *Racializing Jesus*, 139–49). By way of another example, one might add here the role that Hellenistic Christianity was understood to have played in bridging the Jewish mission of Jesus and the Gentile mission of the early church, where the Hellenists were used to help bypass the more narrow limitations of the Jewish-Palestinian Christians (see Todd Penner, *In Praise of Christian Origins: Stephen and the Hellenists in Lukan Apologetic Historiography* [Emory Studies in Early Christianity 10; New York: Continuum, 2004], 1–59).

¹³ Casey, “Who’s Afraid of Jesus Christ?,” 133.

¹⁴ William Arnal, “The Cipher ‘Judaism’ in Contemporary Jesus Scholarship,” in *Apocalypticism, Anti-Semitism and the Historical Jesus: Subtexts in Criticism* (ed. J. S. Kloppenborg and J. W. Marshall; JSNTSup 275; London: T & T Clark, 2005), 30 (my emphasis). See also idem, *The Symbolic Jesus: Historical Scholarship, Judaism and the Construction of Contemporary Identity* (Religion in Culture; London: Equinox, 2005). In line with this emphasis, Dale Martin’s important essay on the dichotomy between Judaism and Hellenism when read, at least in part, as a component of modern scholarly cultural identity, is also helpful for situating the larger issues raised in this essay (“Paul and the Judaism/Hellenism Dichotomy: Toward a Social History of the Question,” in *Paul beyond the Judaism/Hellenism Divide* [ed. T. Engberg-Pedersen; Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2001], 29–61).

¹⁵ There is a parallel here to the way in which scholars have also distanced Nazi historiography (as a form of propaganda) from the more “high-minded” practices by earlier historians like von Ranke, with the aim of demonstrating the existence of a pure tradition that is then seen as being perverted by historians of the Third Reich (see, e.g., John Mason Brown, “Nazi Concepts of History,” *The Review of Politics* 2 [1940]: 180–96).

Grundmann's work (among many others),¹⁶ but there is also a sense in which the focus on the most obvious (and odious) examples of culturally and socially distorted approaches to the past functions to displace and to mask broader systemic problems in disciplinary methods, history, and interpretations. To what degree do the configurations that enabled Grundmann's analysis persist by virtue of modern scholarly lack of engagement of the social and cultural structures embodied in and reified by the *received* methods and models of historical investigation and interpretation? To what degree has the guild displaced the problematic of its *own* approaches to Judaism and Jews by gazing long and hard on early Christian historiography in the period of the Third Reich?

THE OTHERIZING OF JEWS IN THE EUROPEAN INTELLECTUAL IMAGINARY

In *The Typological Imaginary*, Kathleen Biddick offers a fascinating but chilling account of the different ways medieval and early modern practices of self-definition systematically reinscribed Jews and Judaism within supersessionist frames of reference.¹⁷ Christians were able, seemingly effortlessly, to map deep-rooted cultural biases against Jews and Judaism onto a symbolic and visual structure that reinscribed and legitimated the oppression within a religio-philosophical framework of interpretation, offering a kind of naturalization and ontological grounding of their colonizing strategies of engagement. By essentially creating a split between the "classic Jew" of the Hebrew Bible and the contemporary "Talmudic Jew," Christians managed thereby to create, in Biddick's estimation, a "'real' classic Jewish body, infused with wisdom and untainted by the obstinacy of refusing to recognize Christ... [providing] a seemingly timeless antique Jewish origin that could be controlled, circulated, and reproduced."¹⁸ Jews were essentially "otherized" out of existence, understood to be legitimate within the fantasy of a pre-Christian era but possessing no authentic existence within the present. Indeed, the

¹⁶ Cf. Gerhard Kittel's *Die Judenfrage* (2d ed.; Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1933). For an assessment of Kittel's historical reconstructive work, see Robert P. Ericksen, *Theologians under Hitler: Gerhard Kittel, Paul Althaus and Emanuel Hirsch* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985), 50–70.

¹⁷ Kathleen Biddick, *The Typological Imaginary: Circumcision, Technology, History* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2003), esp. 21–44.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 41, 43.

contemporary Jew was, in effect, a categorically different entity than that Jew of the misty past, an argument that bears some genealogical relation to the later distinction in European thought between the ancient "Semite" and the contemporary "Jew" (as well as between Judaism as a "religion" versus the Jew as a member of a distinct "race").

My current interest in Biddick's argument lies precisely in the broader import of Christian practices of self-identification and self-definition, which were continually worked out in relation to Jews and Judaism in Western society. I do not think one can emphasize strongly enough the radical effect such discourses had on the construction of Jews and Judaism in cultural, religious, and political thinking, especially in the post-Reformation period. Following Edward Said's challenge, I argue that scholars of humanistic traditions have not paid nearly enough attention to the "interrelations between scholarship (or literature, for that matter) and the institutions of nationalism."¹⁹ Said specifies that cultural historians of the later nineteenth century have largely overlooked the "geographical notation, the theoretical mapping and charting of territory that underlies Western fiction, historical writing, and philosophical discourse...[T]he authority of the observer, and of European geographical centrality, is buttressed by a cultural discourse regulating and confining the non-European to a secondary racial, cultural, ontological status."²⁰ Said also notes that this regulation and confinement of the outsider was essential for emergent national European identities, as oppositions and negatives are key elements in the constitution of the hegemonic subject.²¹

In Said's approach, geographic distinction is foundational in this effort to construct European identity, and the Other is fundamentally (perhaps even necessarily) an *Oriental* subject. When reading Said in conjunction with Biddick's work on medieval graphic technologies and the attempt to de-temporalize Jews of this earlier period, one would be inclined to note that eighteenth- and nineteenth-century European historians evidenced a similar penchant for dislocating contemporary Jewry through a retrojection and displacement of modern ideologies

¹⁹ Edward Said, "Secular Interpretation, the Geographical Element, and the Methodology of Imperialism," in *After Colonialism: Imperial Histories and Postcolonial Displacements* (ed. G. Prakash; Princeton Studies in Culture/Power/History; Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995), 22.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 36, 37.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 29–30, 37.

onto a (re)constructed past. If rising European nations depended on a geographically distinct Other in order to substantiate emergent national identities, these same entities similarly required the Jew and Judaism as its “other” to establish a hegemonic and normative identity within a Christian (even if “secularized”) framework.

In some sense, then, there was a necessary corollary here between the geographic and the temporal, for the Jew was an Oriental subject.²² But this was a form of Orientalism that was grounded in historical perspective, grafted on to a larger hermeneutical framework of historical development that established a trajectory from the ancient Greeks to the Prussian state, all of which intersected with the evolution of the modern nation-state itself and concomitant emergent nationalism.²³ In this view, historical scholarship visualizes through the form and substance of historical writing the very real cultural politics of the modern world; in essence, the present realities—or at least the construction of the imaginary—are mapped out in and by scholarly historical work. But rather than just looking at some kind of rewriting of history, one should be thinking more broadly in terms of the categories used for historical analysis. Rewriting there was, but more foundational and critical was the establishment of paradigms and constructions of understanding the historical and cultural past that served to necessitate the kinds of questions asked and the type of results that could be generated. The forceful technologies of scholarship not only ensured that the past would reinscribe present knowledge, but, even more importantly, they made certain, in the process, that this function of scholarship would be masked to both the scholarly community and its reading public.²⁴

It is from within this framework that recent theoretical work on Jewish Emancipation and the subsequent and diverse responses to this Western/European phenomenon from both Jews and non-Jews has

²² See, for example, Kelley’s discussion of the orientalizing function of the discourse on Judaism in Hegel, F. C. Baur, and Rudolf Bultmann (*Racializing Jesus*, 52–59, 74–78, 148–50).

²³ Said also stresses the importance of industrialization and the rise to dominance of the bourgeoisie (“Secular Interpretation,” 36).

²⁴ For a brief discussion of some of the hermeneutical facets of traditional lines of historical inquiry, see Caroline Vander Stichele and Todd Penner, “Mastering the Tools or Retooling the Masters? The Legacy of Historical-Critical Discourse,” in *Her Master’s Tools? Feminist and Post-Colonial Engagements of Historical-Critical Discourse* (ed. C. Vander Stichele and T. Penner; SBL Global Perspectives on the Bible 9; Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature; Leiden: Brill, 2005), 3–9.

forced a rethinking of some fundamental assumptions surrounding the attempt to assimilate Jews within social contexts from which they had been systematically excluded for centuries. My approach here situates the study of early Christianity in relation to Judaism within this modern historical and socio-cultural context. It is paramount that contemporary scholars engage in contextualizing their field of knowledge, but I am also aware that the general framework of the discourse of nineteenth-century scholarship has tended to mask the connection of method to discursive structures in society and thus systematically erased the ideological context of its origin and development. My forays into this territory are thus obviously only initial, partial, and fragmentary moves in the reexamination of this earlier period. Further, given the outline above, my approach to these issues is necessarily informed by a colonial-critical analytic, since, if nothing else, the *Judenfrage* is quintessentially a question about colonial subjectification and ordering.²⁵ While few biblical and early Christian scholars have given much consideration to the implications of these colonial formations on the development and discourse of the study of history, some scholars, such as Daniel and Jonathan Boyarin, have been adamant about contextualizing Jewish identity (over the past two hundred years) within a postcolonial framework of hybridity.²⁶ That is the model I adopt here. Finally, following

²⁵ Cf. Susannah Heschel, "Jewish Study as Counterhistory," in *Insider/Outsider: American Jews and Multiculturalism* (ed. D. Biale, M. Galchinsky, and S. Heschel; Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), 110–11, who similarly highlights the nineteenth-century colonial and hegemonic ordering character of early Christian scholarship.

²⁶ For a revealing application of postcolonial theory in this vein, see Jonathan Boyarin, *Storm from Paradise: The Politics of Jewish Memory* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1992), esp. 59–60, 81–94, who draws on Said and Spivak to detail the multiple effects on the identity formation of colonized subjectivities encountered in imperial contexts. See also the study by Daniel Boyarin, "Homophobia and the Postcoloniality of the 'Jewish Science'," in *Queer Theory and the Jewish Question* (ed. D. Boyarin, D. Itzkovitz, and A. Pellegrini; New York: Columbia University Press, 2003), 166–98 (cf. idem, "What Does a Jew Want?; or, The Political Meaning of the Phallus," in *The Psychoanalysis of Race* [ed. C. Lane; New York: Columbia University Press, 1998], 211–40; "The Colonial Drag: Zionism, Gender, and Mimicry," in *The Pre-Occupation of Postcolonial Studies* [ed. F. Afzal-Khan and K. Seshadri-Crooks; Durham: Duke University Press, 2000], 234–65; and *Unheroic Conduct: The Rise of Heterosexuality and the Invention of the Jewish Man* [Contraversions; Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997], esp. 189–312). My argument in this essay is much indebted to the outlines promulgated by Boyarin (cf. his following comment: "The processes of Jewish modernization and Westernization, known collectively as the Emancipation, are intensely similar to the dislocating effects suffered by the colonial subject educated in Europe" ["Homophobia," 176]). The most recent postcolonial study on the New Testament, Stephen D. Moore's *Empire and Apocalypse: Postcolonialism and the New Testament* (The Bible in the Modern

this general line of inquiry might also help one better elucidate and assess the genealogies that lie behind the later treatment of Jews in the Third Reich, aligning scholars such as Grundmann and Kittel with the scholarship that came before in such a way that one might discern, as well, how that legacy continues into the present.

JEWISH EMANCIPATION AND THE ANXIETY OF EMPIRE

It is in this context that one must reassess the Emancipation of the Jews in European societies, engaging the complex kinds of cultural and social interactions that were pervasive in (and contingent on) the rise of major nation-state powers in the modern world. Indeed, one of the critical factors that has been stressed in the recent reevaluation of Jewish Emancipation is the rather ambivalent nature of the liberalism of modernity in terms of its emancipatory agenda and potential. Two primary concerns of this liberalism were related to secularity and religion, particularly the intersection of the burgeoning nation-state with identity in (and outside of) national formations. This intersection was played out in a variety of ways, but most certainly it contributed to the formulations of academic inquiry that were mushrooming in relation to the evolution of national identities.

In her recent study of the correlating effects of modernity on the identity of Jews and women in European society, Wendy Brown makes a forceful case that the discourse of emancipatory rhetoric, especially the emphasis on *tolerance*, was in essence focused on the regulation of identity, which, in her mind, accounts for how easily (and quickly) the construction of Jewish identity shifted from a religious to a racial orientation—far from being a liberal liberative move *in toto* (as is the conventional view), there were rather complex and contradictory social, cultural, and political impulses operative in the endeavor to emancipate Jews.²⁷ A major stumbling block for emergent modernity was the (nec-

World 12; Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix, 2006), surprisingly offers almost no reflection on the shaping of the discipline of biblical criticism itself within a colonial context and as an act of imperializing formation.

²⁷ Wendy Brown, "Tolerance as Supplement: The 'Jewish Question' and the 'Woman Question'," in her *Regulating Aversion: Tolerance in the Age of Identity and Empire* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006), 48–77. On the similar correlation of the problematics of liberalism for both Jews and women, see Laura Levitt, "Letting Go of Liberalism:

essary) integration of Jews into an essentially Christian-ly (re)formed society and culture. To the degree that Jews were willing to assimilate into the larger socio-cultural fabric of diverse European national identities, the “problem” was more or less made explicit, since the goal of emancipation was, in larger part at least, focused on the assimilation of the Jewish subject.²⁸ The move to racial characterizations of Jews not less than 100 years after the broad sweeping European reforms served to reconstitute the Jewish otherizing effect of Western discourse firmly in the body of the Jewish subject. Whereas Biddick’s study, noted earlier, examined the primary function of otherizing Jews through the religio-cultural symbolism of the pre-modern era, one now observes a turn to the otherizing of the Jewish body as one essential semiotic component of modern meaning-making in the context of state formation. Therein difference—the difference to be tolerated—as Brown notes, was shifted from belief to *ontoi*,²⁹ and henceforth such difference became all the easier to regulate, control, and manipulate, from all sides.

One thus observes in this framework the emergence of specific patterns that would prove formative for broader societal responses to Jews, particularly the development of a “conceptual Jew” paradigm that powerfully shaped perceptions and discourses with respect to the Jewish “other.” Assessing the important role of the discourse of the Christian Church in substantiating specific images of Jews, Zygmunt Bauman notes:

Feminism and the Emancipation of the Jews,” in *Postcolonialism, Feminism, and Religious Discourse* (ed. L. E. Donaldson and K. Pui-lan; New York: Routledge, 2002), 161–79. Patchen Markell phrases the conflict in a complementary manner: “...the institutions of the state must maintain vigilant surveillance of the Jews to be sure that they are conforming to the terms of their emancipation—and such a surveillance requires that Jews be recognizable. The imperative of emancipation becomes, paradoxically, that the state must see at all times that each Jew has ceased to be Jewish” (*Bound by Recognition* [Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003], 146 [his emphasis]). For Markell, the terms of emancipation situated in the attempt of the state to become sovereign was an “impossible project,” one in which the Jews bore a “disproportionate” role in the “contradiction.” See also the helpful historical contextualization of this broader argument with respect to the inherent “flaw” of liberalism offered by Dagmar Herzog, *Intimacy and Exclusion: Religious Politics in Pre-Revolutionary Baden* (Princeton Studies in Power/Culture/History; Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996), 81–84.

²⁸ Markell argues that emancipation itself was an indispensable act of sovereignty undertaken by the state, one which authored and authorized the state’s identity in this unique moment of history (*Bound by Recognition*, 133–38).

²⁹ Brown, “Tolerance as Supplement,” 58.

The conceptual Jew was a semantically overloaded entity, comprising and blending meanings which ought to be kept apart.... The conceptual Jew was *visqueux* (in Sartrean terms), slimy (in Mary Douglas's terms)—an image construed as compromising and defying the order of things.... Construed in such a way, the conceptual Jew performed a function of prime importance; he visualized the horrifying consequences of boundary-transgression, of not remaining fully in the fold, of any conduct short of unconditional loyalty and unambiguous choice; he was the prototype and arch-pattern of all nonconformity, heterodoxy, anomaly and aberration.³⁰

Bauman's comments are focused largely on the discourse of the Christian church, but it is just as critical to engage this discourse at the level of scholarly historical study related to Christian origins in relation to Judaism.

Without a doubt, theological and cultural expressions in European history shaped the image of the "conceptual Jew." Yet, perhaps even more fundamental, was the role of modern institutions of learning and historical inquiry in sustaining these patterns of thought. In his insightful engagement of European historical analysis, Dipesh Chakrabarty has raised precisely this issue with respect to the disciplinary study of history in the burgeoning European university institutions of the early nineteenth century. Chakrabarty argues at length that the conceptual structures and the methodological frameworks employed by European social sciences, in particular the discipline of history, translated cultural concerns, biases, and power relations into an epistemic regime of knowledge production and control. Of special note in this context is Chakrabarty's observation regarding the close connection between the rise of historical study and the evolution of the modern nation-state. He observes, "so long as one operates within the discourse of 'history' produced at the institutional site of the university, it is not possible simply to walk out of the deep collusion between 'history' and the modernizing narrative(s) of citizenship, bourgeois public and private, and the nation-state. 'History' as a knowledge system is firmly embedded in institutional practices that invoke the nation-state at every step...."³¹ In this respect, then, I would argue that scholars

³⁰ Zygmunt Bauman, *Modernity and the Holocaust* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2000), 39. For a full delineation of Bauman's stated premise, particularly in terms of the depiction of the Jewish body, see Sander Gilman, *The Jew's Body* (New York: Routledge, 1991).

³¹ Dipesh Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference*

need to pay much more attention to the institutional roots of their conceptions of Jews and Judaism, particularly as the study of Judaism by historians of early Christianity was intricately bound up with the rise of the modern nation-state, the use of history to substantiate the roots of that enterprise, and, finally, the problem created for modern nationhood by the presence of Jews who had been substantively otherized in Christian discourse for hundreds of years prior. This unique situation created fertile ground for the rise of methods and forms of knowledge that would generate and sustain various political and cultural reasonings and practices for nation-states dealing with “the Jewish problem,” even though the practitioners themselves were wholly unaware of the real life effects of the production of the historical Jewish imaginary or, for that matter, the effects of “real life” on their own scholarly methods and inquiry.

The socio-cultural vagaries of specific locales played an important role in shaping the regional and temporal manifestations of the kind of broader moves outlined above.³² And, while the historical phenomenon is complex and convoluted, one can nonetheless affirm that most of those engaging Judaism and Christianity in nineteenth- and early twentieth-century scholarship³³ were articulating versions of Jewish and Christian identity, as well as postulating grounds for similarities and differences, based precisely on the modern fascination and classification that resulted from Jewish Emancipation and its concomitant *Judenfrage* or even *Judenkrisis*. In many respects, Jewish scholarship wore these identity markers much more visibly than did its non-Jewish counterpart. For instance, in *Abraham Geiger and the Jewish Jesus*, Susannah Heschel

(Princeton Studies in Culture/Power/History; Princeton University Press, 2000), 41. See also Christian Simon, “History as a Case-Study of the Relations between University Professors and the State in Germany,” in *Biblical Studies and the Shifting of Paradigms 1850–1914* (ed. H. G. Reventlow and W. Farmer; JSOTSup 192; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1995), 168–96, who similarly notes the formative connection of the discipline of history in the universities with state and national identity. Within this framework, it was also understood that Jews could not engage in such historical study properly, since only Christians could understand and appreciate “German history” as such (190).

³² For example, in her compelling study, Herzog demonstrates how a particular Christian religio-political issue helped shift the opinion of the assembly of the Grand Duchy of Baden in a mere eighteen months from opposing Jewish emancipation to endorsing it by a two-thirds majority (*Intimacy and Exclusion*, 53–84).

³³ See, for instance, the helpful accumulation of data in Christhard Hoffmann, *Juden und Judentum im Werk deutscher Althistoriker des 19. und 20. Jahrhunderts* (Studies in Judaism in Modern Times 9; Leiden: Brill, 1988).

demonstrates the degree to which the *Wissenschaft des Judentums* research agenda was significantly committed to the task of establishing a Jewish identity for Jesus as a way of integrating itself into modern European society.³⁴ My focus in this essay, however, is rather on the methods and intellectual practices of Christian biblical scholarship, particularly those scholars who focused on the “backgrounds” of early Christian literature and history for the purposes of illuminating (and differentiating) its concepts and ideas in historical context.

DIE JUDENFRAGE AND THE THEOLOGICAL FORMATION OF THE MODERN STATE

Although any entrance into this discussion is going to be arbitrary, one particularly intriguing site for the origins of biblical scholarship is the debate between the famous New Testament radical critic (and young Hegelian) Bruno Bauer and Karl Marx over precisely the matter of the

³⁴ For example, Geiger’s argument that what was positive in Christianity was a result of the direct influence of Judaism and, vice versa, that what was negative in Judaism was the consequence of the influence of Christianity, is readily understandable within this broader European context of the otherization of Jews and Judaism in discourse (Heschel, *Abraham Geiger and the Jewish Jesus*, 48). Quite helpful in this respect is Maren Niehoff’s study, where she demonstrates how the *Wissenschaft des Judentums* in the nineteenth century articulated quite radically different views of Philo and Alexandrian Judaism in order to negotiate modern and opposing approaches to assimilation, acculturation, and differentiation (“Alexandrian Judaism in 19th Century *Wissenschaft des Judentums*: Between Christianity and Modernization,” in *Jüdische Geschichte in hellenistisch-römischer Zeit; Wege der Forschung: Vom alten zum neuen Schüver* [ed. A. Oppenheimer and E. Müller-Luckner; Schriften des Historischen Kollegs 44; Munich: Oldenbourg, 1999], 9–28). Similarly, just as Martin Buber could pathologize the “Western Jew” and in turn draw on the mysticism of Eastern religious Jewry to cultivate an “inner Jewish essence” (see Robertson, ‘Jewish Question’ in *German Literature*, 388–90; cf. Michael Brenner, *The Renaissance of Jewish Culture in Weimer Germany* [New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996], 142–48), so Western Jews could stereotype the “Eastern Jew” in negative ways thereby creating a distinctive but positive ethnic identity for themselves (see David A. Brenner, *Marketing Identities: The Invention of Jewish Ethnicity in Ost und West* [Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1998]). Most recently, in a fascinating article on Bickerman (“Elias Bickerman on the Hellenizing Reformers: A Case Study of an Unconvincing Case,” *JQR* 97 [2007]: 149–79), Albert I. Baumgarten delineates contemporaneous cultural and historical explanations for Bickerman’s (usually considered odd) position that it was Hellenistic Jews who were ultimately responsible for the radicalizing policies of Antiochus IV. See further David N. Myers, *Re-Inventing the Jewish Past: European Jewish Intellectuals and the Zionist Return to History* (Studies in Jewish History; New York: Oxford University Press, 1995); and idem, *Resisting History: Historicism and Its Discontents in German-Jewish Thought* (Jews, Christians, and Muslims from the Ancient to the Modern World; Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003).

Jewish Question. In his response to Bruno Bauer's treatise on *The Jewish Question* (1843), Karl Marx helps one catch a glimpse of the complexities of this debate in the middle of the nineteenth century.³⁵ Bauer's famous treatise was based on his liberal Christian theological framework and consequent historical work that had more or less severed any significant ties between contemporary confession and historical reality. His complaint with respect to the Prussian government was precisely that it was not giving up its Christian privilege in the discussion of emancipation. For Bauer, the state should not have a confessional framework, and the Jews, insofar as they sought to be a part of the state, should not do so either on the basis of claims to any particularistic religious identity. In his view, Jews need to give up being "Jewish" in order to become citizens of the modern state. While this emphasis was standard in the colonial discourses of the period, Marx's response is probably one of the most interesting in (and significant for) that era. Responding with a precise evaluation of the *religious* nature of the "problem," he is especially critical of Bauer's formulation: "The Jew finds himself in *religious* opposition to the state, which recognizes Christianity as its basis. This state is a theologian *ex professo*. Criticism here is criticism of theology; a double-edged criticism—criticism of Christian theology and of Jewish theology. Hence, we continue to operate in the sphere of the theology, however much we may operate *critically* within it."³⁶

This theological articulation of the matter is intriguing, in part because I believe that Marx, writing in 1843, was prescient with respect to the critical issues that would become entangled in the conversations

³⁵ For a fuller treatment of the various issues in this text, see Shlomo Avineri, "Marx and Jewish Emancipation," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 25 (1964): 445–50; as well as Dennis Fischman, "The Jewish Question about Marx," *Polity* 21 (1989): 755–75; Warren Breckman, *Marx, The Young Hegelians, and the Origins of Radical Social Theory: Dethroning the Self* (Modern European Philosophy; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 292–97; Markell, *Bound by Recognition*, 127–31; and Diane Paul, "In the Interests of Civilization': Marxist Views of Race and Culture in the Nineteenth Century," *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 42 (1981): 115–138 (esp. 127–35). On Bauer's treatise, see the brief treatment by Kelley, *Racializing Jesus*, 82–84; as well as Douglas Moggach, "Republican Rigorism and Emancipation in Bruno Bauer," in *The New Hegelians: Politics and Philosophy in the Hegelian School* (ed. D. Moggach; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 114–35; and idem, *The Philosophy and Politics of Bruno Bauer* (Modern European Philosophy; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 145–49.

³⁶ The English translation of Marx's "On the Jewish Question" is taken from the following website (cited 02 December 2007): www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1844/jewish-question/index.htm. Also see the discussion in Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *The Holy Family, or Critique of Critical Critique* (Honolulu: University Press of the Pacific, 2002), 117–21, 127–33, 136, 143–59.

of elite European non-Jewish males regarding the granting of citizenry rights to Jews. Marx understood that at the heart of Bauer's formulation, as well as that of many of his contemporaries, lay a *theological* substructure to the political discussion.³⁷ Marx suggests that this "problem" exists largely because Bauer could not conceive of Judaism except as a "crude religious criticism of Christianity, and therefore saw in it 'merely' a religious significance. . . ." Especially important in this respect was Bauer's Hegelianism, since within the young leftist Hegelian movement Judaism was seen as a serious threat because of its inherent link with religious identity, which was viewed as being ahistorical and unchanging and thus a principle that endangered the modern turn to liberal-democratic impulses. Judaism was perceived to be the antithesis of the post-Enlightenment development of politics and nationhood.³⁸ As Robert Wistrich notes, the "original contribution of the young Hegelians lay in their 'historicism'—their translation of rationalist objections to Judeo-Christianity into new social and historical categories."³⁹ It was precisely within this framework that Marx criticized Bauer's formulation of the "problem."

Marx's solution is to radically *secularize* the "question," asserting that Judaism is rather to be identified with practical need and self interest, based on the identification of the Jew with the merchant class.⁴⁰ But

³⁷ Indeed, elsewhere Marx could tease Bauer for his transferal of fideistic commitment from Yahweh to the Prussian State (cf. Avineri, "Marx and Jewish Emancipation," 447).

³⁸ Following the early Hegel, Bauer understood Judaism to be a religion of servitude and thus finitude, representing the direct antithesis to the impulses of the modern nation-state (cf. Markell, *Bound by Recognition*, 138–43; and Massimiliano Tomba, "Exclusiveness and Political Universalism in Bruno Bauer," in Moggach, *New Hegelians*, esp. 97–103). Also see the excellent assessment by Robert S. Wistrich, "Radical Antisemitism in France and Germany (1840–1880)," *Modern Judaism* 15 (1995): 109–35 (esp. 121–29); cf. Kelley's outline of Heidegger's similar construction of Judaism (*Racializing Jesus*, 89–128).

³⁹ Wistrich, "Radical Antisemitism," 123. Cf. his later statement: the young Hegelians' "anti-Judaism and their hostility to Jewry was a post-Christian and a post-Enlightenment phenomenon, an integral part of their universalist vision of social and national liberation" (130).

⁴⁰ This identification allows Marx (in his mind) to push the emancipation matter further (or at least co-opt that program)—if one wants emancipation for and from Judaism, then one must abolish the "preconditions" that allow the social and economic facets of Judaism to exist, which, for Marx, were the material conditions produced and sustained by bourgeois society. However, Marx's real agenda is rather to radically undermine Christianity from within its own discourse (Wistrich, "Radical Antisemitism," 126). Marx therefore concludes his essay with the following sentiment: "Christianity sprang from Judaism. It has merged again with Judaism. . . . Christianity is the sublime thought of Judaism, Judaism is the common practical application of

Marx's major contribution, it seems to me, is to pinpoint precisely where the larger problematic of Jewish Emancipation lay for European societies. Specifically, Bauer's larger move to reconceptualize the Jew as a fundamental challenge for the secularizing liberal-democratic process coheres well with the various threads of Jewish identity that were being woven into European intellectual and cultural formations. What Marx saw, but what Bauer could not, was that the emergence of the liberal democratic state was, in a Hegelian framework, another reconfiguration of Christianity itself. Michel de Certeau has forcefully articulated the move from church to state in this era: "There is a *revival* of religious structures, but one based upon *another system*. Christian organizations are put to renewed use, in relation to an order which they no longer have the power of directing."⁴¹

In this respect, while the language appears to have shifted in some ways, the broader aim of the discourse has not. Whether one would rid society of Jewish identity or regulate that identity, the liberal emancipatory spirit focused on identification and delineation of the "conceptual Jew" in either case, and this move is largely to be attributed to the Christian legacy of the West. This point is decisive for the formation of early Christian scholarship, in part because the methods developed within the historical conceptual paradigms of European thought

Christianity. . . ." As a typical Enlightenment thinker, Marx has a simple solution to the dilemma he poses: if one abolishes "the *empirical* essence of Judaism—huckstering and its preconditions—the Jew will have become *impossible*, because his consciousness no longer has an object. . . ." (his emphasis). Herein one also perceives the radical critique he leveled against the Christian bourgeois society that, in his view, precisely allows *this Jew* to exist. Read in this light, it would seem that Marx, like Bauer, would still want the Jew to "disappear" (and certainly his discourse did not do much for the positive advancement of the perception of Jews and Judaism).

⁴¹ Michel de Certeau, *The Writing of History* (trans. T. Conley; New York: Columbia University Press, 1988), 156 (cf. 175–79) (his emphasis). De Certeau adeptly illustrates how the transfer that takes place in the early modern period both demands a critique of the Christian legacy while also offering new re-Christianized (but now secular) principles of its own (176)—i.e., "a social reinterpretation of Christianity" (179). De Certeau demonstrates how in the very process of moving away from Christian traditions modern thinkers like Bauer were reifying the fundamental structures of that tradition on another level. Tal Asad has pointedly addressed the problems with this largely unexamined legacy of the modern world (see his *Formations of the Secular: Christianity, Islam, Modernity* [Cultural Memory in the Present; Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2003]). For discussion of the implications of this historical framework for assessing the often convoluted and conflicting role of Biblical Studies in the academy today, see Todd Penner, "Is Boer among the Prophets? Transforming the Legacy of Marxian Critique," in *Secularism and Biblical Studies* (ed. R. Boer; BibleWorld; London: Equinox Publishing, 2008).

transferred the modern concern with Jews onto the historical plane. I consider two elements especially significant for this development: (1) the rise of philology in German historical criticism; and (2) the influence of Hegelian understandings of the historical process, particularly with respect to the role of ancient Hellenism.

The Rise of Philology

Philology as a specific historical linguistic approach provided a vital method for stabilizing identities in and over time.⁴² As Joan DeJean observes, “The philological science, as it was defined by its founders in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, was an intellectual totality, a world unto itself that at the same time gave access to the essence of nations. In particular, philology was the tool German scholars would use to rehabilitate antiquity and reveal the Greeks as the standard for beauty, grandeur, and national genius.”⁴³ This was critical precisely because Greek culture was to be the foundation of emergent Prussian/German national identity.⁴⁴ One need only go back to Herder and Fichte to see how this particular emphasis was played out. With respect to Herder especially, upon whose thought much of modern philosophy of language has been based, there was a clear connection between the language of a particular *Volk* and their essence as a nation.⁴⁵ Herein *völkisch* expression—that is, popular—is taken to be the *Geist* of the people as a whole. The whole connection to blood and soil, which would take on more dramatic (and inhumane) nuances in later European history, is already grounded in Herder’s earlier thought.⁴⁶

⁴² It is not by coincidence that this philological science was paralleled by a text-critical practice that sought to stabilize textuality in the ancient world in a like manner (see Todd Penner, “‘In the Beginning’: Post-Critical Reflections on Early Christian Textual Transmission and Modern Textual Transgression,” *PRSt* 33 [2006]: 415–34).

⁴³ Joan DeJean, “Sex and Philology: Sappho and the Rise of German Nationalism,” *Representations* 27 (1989): 148.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 149.

⁴⁵ Although somewhat dated, the connection of language to nationalism in Herder’s thought is illustrated well by Robert Reinhold Ergang, *Herder and the Foundations of German Nationalism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1931), 140–76.

⁴⁶ Critical in this discussion is the association of each *Volk* with a unique *National-charakter*. The “national character” was seen to be expressed in the language, religion, traditions, and artistic representations of various *Völker* (see the discussion in Matti Bunzl, “*Völkerpsychologie* and German-Jewish Emancipation,” in H. Glenn Penny and Matti Bunzl, eds., *Worldly Provincialism: German Anthropology in the Age of Empire* [Social History, Popular Culture, and Politics in Germany; Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2003], 47–85 [esp. 58]).

It is in this context, for instance, that one should assess Herder's appreciation for Hebrew biblical language and ideas. His idealized portrait of the pietistic and pastoral nomadic faith of the ancient Israelites, expressed in simple poetry, illustrates aptly his broader framework: herein appears a particular *Volk* whose identity was expressed through a specific language. All of that, of course, bore no resemblance to Jews in his contemporary context—they were, in his mind, the products of the devolution of this high-spirited faith of Abraham.⁴⁷ Still, the task of philology supports the identification of a people, emphasizing language as the tie that binds culture to the core identity of a *Volk* thereby providing continuity in historical time.⁴⁸ Language thus became a site for the construction of a stable and contiguous (and hence regulative) historical religio-cultural imaginary. More importantly, however, this identification and delineation was understood to be historically particularistic and conditioned—there was no universal essence. On the one hand, such an assessment contradicted Bauer's claim that there was a universal Jewish essence that stood above history and threatened modern post-Enlightenment developments. On the other, it supported the broad effort to delineate identity in clear traceable lines, tying these historical identity constructs to linguistic phenomena. This framework opened up a large space for various options with respect to reconstituting *Die Judenfrage* in historical and temporal terms.

The burgeoning interest in philology, with a special investment in that method's ability to demarcate clear and traceable identities and their development through language, also readily connected with the rise of the discipline of anthropology and the creation of museums in

⁴⁷ See further, Robertson, 'Jewish Question' in *German Literature*, 30–31; and esp. Frank E. Manuel, *The Broken Staff: Judaism through Christian Eyes* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1992), 263–72. It should be noted that not all scholarship on Semitic religion followed the Herderian line of inquiry. Later studies that focused on the contrast between Aryan religious mythology and that of the Semitic peoples tended to denigrate the latter (see Kelly, *Racializing Jesus*, as well as Stefan Arvidsson, *Aryan Idols: Indo-European Mythology as Ideology and Science* [trans. S. Wichmann; Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006], 63–123).

⁴⁸ See the helpful discussion by F. M. Barnard, trans. and ed., *J. G. Herder on Social and Political Culture* (Cambridge Studies in the History and Theory of Politics; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1969), 17–32. As opposed to later racial theories on *völkisch* identity, Herder was emphatic that language and its expression in and through culture was the element that linked people historically and psychologically to their shared cultural traditions. Cf. the discussion in Anthony Pagden, "The Effacement of Difference: Colonialism and the Origins of Nationalism in Diderot and Herder," in Prakash, *After Colonialism*, 129–52, esp. 143–46; as well as Markell, *Bound by Recognition*, 47–53.

Europe, wherein the scientific study of these phenomena received a discourse, method, and space for systematic and organized public display and consumption.⁴⁹ Indeed, while much has been made of later racial theories that sought to explicate identity based on identifiable (even if not always visible) characteristics of a people group, the ground work was already laid much earlier in the Herderian model of the *völkisch* nature of human groups, coupled with the widespread interest, in an age of imperialism, to classify, systematize, organize, and then display various facets of this scholarly fascination and creation. It was philology itself that gave rise to the linguistic categories of “Aryan” and “Semite” in the first place.⁵⁰

In this way, philology did much political and cultural work in the age of European imperialism, particularly in the Prussian context. And certainly its use with respect to identifying “the conceptual Jew” was just one among many other functions it had. Still, the paramount role that philology performed in the rise of early Christian scholarship can not be overstated, and with it came essentialist notions of how language functioned with respect to mediating culture in a specific, in this case religious, *Volk*.⁵¹ Moreover, the importance of this manner of organizing early Christian historical inquiry cannot be overstated. In his assessment of comparative philology in the study of early Christianity, Smith notes that philology was used to protect the unique nature of earliest Christianity. In this enterprise, Judaism was used both to insulate Christianity from the larger environment and to form the entity that Christianity was to transcend.⁵² For Smith, philology was a “stratagem”

⁴⁹ See the useful studies by Susan A. Crane, *Collecting and Historical Consciousness in Early Nineteenth-Century Germany* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 2000); Andrew Zimmerman, *Anthropology and Antihumanism in Imperial Germany* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001); H. Glenn Penny, *Objects of Culture: Ethnology and Ethnographic Museums in Imperial Germany* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002); and Penny and Bunzl, *Worldly Provincialism*.

⁵⁰ Richard Steigmann-Gall, *The Holy Reich: Nazi Conceptions of Christianity, 1919–1945* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 108. Heschel notes the role played by Ernest Renan in introducing this distinction into discussions of early Christianity (*Abraham Geiger and the Jewish Jesus*, 156). Cf. Kelley, *Racializing Jesus*, 85–86.

⁵¹ I am obviously oversimplifying the historical contours of the move from philology proper to the delineation of religious and cultural identities. For a more detailed and localized assessment, see Horst Junginger, *Von der philologischen zur völkischen Religionswissenschaft: Das Fach an der Universität Tübingen von der Mitte des 19. Jahrhunderts bis zum Ende des Dritten Reiches* (Contubernium 51; Stuttgart: Franz Steiner, 1999).

⁵² Smith, *Drudgery Divine*, 81–83.

for negotiating particular versions of origins.⁵³ While that may be the case, the critical question is what modern work was this ancient philological science accomplishing? What modern identities were being worked out with respect to the linguistic and cultural lines thereby being mapped in and onto the past?

Scholars of Judaism and Christianity in antiquity thus ought to be acutely aware that philological methods were paramount in establishing the genealogies of tradition, religion, and culture that are designated by the term "Judaism." The broad based approach of *völkisch* identification was indispensable for constructing and then tracing out the essential contours of Judaism in the ancient world, thereby offering the entity that Christianity was differentiated from and which it was understood to transcend. And focusing, at least initially, on philology streamlined the differentiation process. For instance, while Hellenistic/Greek and Palestinian Jews were understood to embody critical divisions in their historical character as respective *Völker*, difference in language itself was the only divergence that truly mattered, since all the rest emerged from that point of difference. Further, when James Barr published his critique of Kittel's *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*,⁵⁴ he undermined only the philological assumptions that lay behind associating complex word meanings with specific historical-cultural contexts (and constructing stable linguistic relations in word groups/roots over time) without challenging or dismantling the historical and cultural reconstructions of Hellenistic and Palestinian Judaism that had already been based on these very same philological premises.⁵⁵ While the philological assumptions may have been challenged from within a linguistic framework, the associative function of the method had already produced "assured" results of what the culture and traditions of the Jewish *Volk* in antiquity were "in fact" like, and this structure has, in large part, remained in place.

⁵³ Ibid., 79.

⁵⁴ James Barr, *The Semantics of Biblical Language* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1961).

⁵⁵ Maurice Casey provides insight into several of the anti-Semitic interpretations that arise as a result ("Some Anti-Semitic Assumptions in the *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*," *NovT* 41 [1999]: 280–91), but a more systematic and comprehensive evaluation is desperately needed.

Hegelian Understandings of the Historical Process

The philological emphasis received further support in the evolving Hegelian historiography of the Prussian period. Johann Gustav Droysen was of especial importance for scholarly assessment of Hellenistic Judaism and early Christianity, being noted for his *History of Hellenism* (1836) among other works that focused on the classical Greek and then later Hellenistic periods.⁵⁶ Droysen took over the Hegelian approach to historiography, but merged it with the empirical focus of philology. His schemata, while not the only articulation of the paradigm, became one of the more dominant ones to arise in this period. The theological nature of Droysen's understanding of history is manifest throughout, and his focus on freedom as the essence of the historical process had its roots both in Hegel and in the Augustinian theological tradition.⁵⁷ Droysen, in line with the spirit of his age, went back to Greece as the ideal model for freedom, which was to be realized again in the new Prussian age under construction in his own day.⁵⁸ The relationship of language to *Volk* should not be missed here either. It was fully understood that the essential components of Greek culture were inextricably linked to the Greek language. Now, importantly for Droysen, the philosophical system of the Greeks also collapsed under the historical conditionality of the time period—it was not itself universal. Hellenism became that vehicle, however, that universalized freedom through its creation of a unified world empire, and thus formed the precondition for Christianity, which itself would reconcile the historical and natural planes of existence. The Prussian state was then understood to be the offspring of this larger historical unfolding.

Herein the Augustinian balance of free will and necessity is played out in history. However, it should be noted that it is “of nature” to differentiate and “of the historical” to push for freedom. Thus, in this

⁵⁶ I rely here on the assessment of Droysen's approach by Robert Southard, *Droysen and the Prussian School of History* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1995), esp. 10–31.

⁵⁷ In his classic study, Arnaldo Momigliano notes the deep rooted Lutheranism that informed Droysen's historiographical framework (“J. G. Droysen between Greeks and Jews,” in *Essays in Ancient and Modern Historiography* [Middletown, Conn: Wesleyan University Press, 1977], 312–14).

⁵⁸ Momigliano's following comment is instructive in this respect: for Droysen, “the history of Hellenism was a *praeparatio evangelica* to the history of Prussia” (ibid., 312). Cf. Philip S. Alexander, “Hellenism and Hellenization as Problematic Historiographical Categories,” in Engberg-Pedersen, *Paul beyond the Judaism/Hellenism Divide*, 67–69; and Martin, “Paul and the Judaism/Hellenism Dichotomy,” 41–42.

framework, the final resolution of the historical unfolding of freedom was a unified empire in which citizens would not be distinguished by definite racial and ethnic characteristics, which, finally, represented the triumph of the historical process itself over nature. This position thus placed Droysen in a very similar camp as Bauer, and it is therefore not surprising that Droysen's history of Christianity invariably left Jewish influence out of the picture, foregrounding instead the pagan Greek background of Christian development.⁵⁹

There is obviously much more that needs to be explored in terms of the roots of the field of early Christian study, as a great deal is involved with respect to the coming together of philology and Hegelian historical structures of meaning, a confluence which itself could be contextualized in differing ways. The programmatic point to highlight, however, is that, as Smith adeptly notes, "for any given group at a given time to choose this or that mode of interpreting their tradition is to opt for a particular way of relating themselves to their historical past and social present."⁶⁰ In the wake of Jewish Emancipation, and in line with an already deeply ingrained system of thought and practice, European scholars worked out their anxiety related to the radical and dramatic shifts taking place in society (both conceptually and also related to reorganizations of labor, family structure, and national institutions)⁶¹ in part by transference onto the "conceptual Jew," who represented the proximate other of European elite culture and who also provided a readily available (and viable) construct by which the social anxieties and antagonisms related to emergent modernization and secularization could be negotiated. Biblical scholarship offered one of many avenues in which this activity could be articulated and executed, and the historical past provided a "natural" and "stable" stage on which to enact this modern political and social work.⁶² The way in which this use of the

⁵⁹ Momigliano, "J. G. Droysen between Greeks and Jews," 315–16. Momigliano does note that Droysen paid more attention to the Jewish connection later in his career (especially since more material, such as Philo, was coming to light), and this followed particularly after his disillusionment with the use of Hegel by the young Hegelians such as Bauer (and their radicalized views on theology).

⁶⁰ Smith, *Drudgery Divine*, 107.

⁶¹ Michel Foucault analyzes this perceptible and radical shift in terms of the three points of "labor, life, and language." See *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences* (New York: Vintage, 1970), esp. 217–302.

⁶² Ward Blanton's recent study, *Displacing Christian Origins: Philosophy, Secularity, and the New Testament* (Religion and Postmodernism; Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007), demonstrates in systematic and substantive ways the larger issues I only touch on in this essay. Cf. Martin, "Paul and the Judaism/Hellenism Dichotomy," 32–44.

past is manifested varies from scholar to scholar, depending on the aims, agendas, and personal predilections of individuals and larger institutions. That said, a broad methodology was established, one which identified patterns of ancient religious and ethnic/national identification based on philological delineations, which played out in a larger conception of historical unfolding that correlated with the development of modern nation-states and the “freedoms” justified, sustained, and regulated therein. Moreover, these methods were intricately bound up with European institutions of learning, which, in turn, substantiated through historical analysis the legitimacy and sovereignty of the modern nation-state that they were to bolster.

AN AMBIVALENT LEGACY

Following the broad contours of the argument outlined above, I would suggest that modern scholars have inherited methods that, in part, render a “conceptual Jew” of the past as a complement to other means of regulating Jews during the rise of modern European national identities and institutions. Moreover, emergent “scientific” methods of study related, in this instance, to historical analysis, helped solidify the transfer of former theological structures onto the secular realm, thereby reifying the religious otherization of Jews and Judaism on an apparently non-theological plane (but the existence of the latter was in part a fiction, as it continued to function religiously/theologically under a new guise). Finally, the legacy of this former enterprise is not so much a particular reading of the Jewish heritage (à la Ferdinand Weber, for example), but rather an approach that affirms both that there is an identifiable and stable Jewish entity to be grasped, classified, and ordered in the past (which includes particular methods for establishing that identity) and that early Christianity is to be understood against the backdrop of this proximate historical other.

The identification, delineation, and focus on genealogy and progression with respect to early Christianity performs a crucial role in this enterprise as well, and herein the construction of the “conceptual Jew” provides the critical foil to achieve these ends in the scholarship on early Christianity. At the beginning of the twenty-first century scholars may have moved beyond a narrow understanding of the initial philological practice of the Herderian tradition (eschewing the extravagances of National Socialist scholarship in the process), but the primary methods

of investigating early Christianity against its Jewish—Hellenistic or Palestinian—background still proceed along the same fundamental lines as they did at the foundation of the modern discipline of critical study of early Christianity. The historical philological and comparative methods and their embedded assumptions have varied application, and the political work that these methods accomplish have no doubt been reconfigured over time (especially in relationship to the evolution of liberal democratic discourse itself). Thus, while the political operations and aims have clearly shifted post-Shoah, the mechanisms by which modern scholars on ancient Judaism and Christianity derive their results generally have not. Further, the degree to which the methods, the discourses, and the results of the analysis obtained therein reconnect to their origins in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, to that degree do scholars also replay (even if unintentionally) the discursive agendas of that era, reproducing in and through their methods the earlier historical imaginaries of eighteenth and nineteenth-century Europe.

There are diverse ways in which this particular approach has been played out over time, but in most cases what is constituted in the process is a stable, uniform conception of ancient Judaism, even in the case of a sub-designation like “Hellenistic” or “Palestinian” Judaism.⁶³ Although Sanders’s work on Paul, mentioned at the outset of this essay, sought to counteract the kinds of presuppositions on Jewish identity that scholars like Wilhelm Bousset (who relied heavily on Weber’s assessment of ancient Judaism) were making,⁶⁴ it is striking that Sanders, while

⁶³ The turn in the 1980s to referring to “Judaisms” in the plural as a way of signifying a kind of diverse complexion within ancient Judaism (see, e.g., Jacob Neusner, William S. Green, and Ernest S. Frerichs, eds., *Judaisms and Their Messiahs at the Turn of the Christian Era* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987]) does little to overcome the basic issues I have raised in this essay. In this paradigm, the signifier “Judaisms” functions to stabilize trajectories of Jewish identity in the midst of data that disrupts the tracing of manifest filiations. In this respect, the multiplication of “Judaisms” is simply a reconfiguration of the older paradigm of “Hellenistic” and “Palestinian” trajectories *within* Judaism.

⁶⁴ See the discussion of Bousset in Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 39–47. Within the paradigm of Judaism outlined above, it is rather typical that Bousset argued, for instance, that the use of the title ὁ κύριος in the “religious sense for Jesus is conceivable only on the soil of the Hellenistic communities” (*Kyrios Christos: A History of the Belief in Christ from the Beginning of Christianity to Irenaeus* [trans. J. E. Steely; Nashville: Abingdon, 1970], 128 [cf. 141, 147]). From a *völkisch* perspective, this was the only conceivable context (even if influenced as it was by Hellenistic Judaism and the LXX) in which the more “open” and “free” language of the Greeks could play its “appropriate” role in expanding the language of the narrower Old Testament/Palestinian tradition.

constructing a substantially different kind of Jewish identity in the past, nonetheless could refer to theological positions in the ancient world as “typically Jewish,”⁶⁵ or, conversely, demonstrate how Paul diverged in substantial ways from patterns of religion found in “Palestinian Judaism.”⁶⁶ It is often touted that Sanders’s seminal work overturned past scholarship precisely on its anti-Jewish stance. While that is true in part, he ultimately offered a variant interpretation of Judaism based on the very same methods of analysis that had established anti-Jewish readings in the first place. The question remains whether this shift really makes a substantial difference, as the culturally and politically colonizing nature of the methods is evidently more masked than the surface interpretations that are rendered by their use. It is a misconception to think that a method would have to be explicitly “anti-Jewish” in order for it to perpetuate a regime of knowledge that functioned to regulate and control Jews and Judaism by postulating unified, stabilized identities/entities in the past and through time. Further, while many scholars are under the impression that Martin Hengel’s *Judaism and Hellenism* signaled a break from the tradition of scholarship delineated in the previous section, it was, rather, a massive restructuring of all of its basic premises, being the dialectical culmination of that former enterprise.⁶⁷

The basic dismantling of the earlier colonizing strategies is not necessarily accomplished by reconfigured interpretations. Rather, the better way forward is to interrogate the methods themselves, perhaps moving to deconstruct both Judaism *and* Christianity as stable entities in the

⁶⁵ Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 517.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 548.

⁶⁷ Martin Hengel, *Judaism and Hellenism: Studies in Their Encounter in Palestine during the Early Hellenistic Period* (trans. J. Bowden; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1981). As I have argued in my earlier work, Hengel’s attempt to Hellenize Palestine and Palestinize the Diaspora offers him a means by which to accomplish Droysen’s vision, but from within Palestine and including Jesus in the structure. He needs Greek in Jerusalem for all the reasons mentioned above with respect to the role of language in defining a unique *völkisch* identity. He requires, also, that Hellenistic Judaism be constructed as fundamentally law-observant in its orientation, which, on one level, correlates well with one of the chief concerns related to the modern Emancipation of the Jews: preventing the incorporation of Judaism back into the unfolding of Christianity (see esp. Penner, *In Praise of Christian Origins*, 23–29; and idem, “The Challenge from Within: Reading Räsänen against Dominant Methodological Discourse,” in *Moving Beyond New Testament Theology? Essays in Conversation with Heikki Räsänen* [ed. T. Penner and C. Vander Stichele; Publications of the Finnish Exegetical Society 88; Helsinki: Finnish Exegetical Society; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2005], 1–31 [esp. 17–28]). Cf. Martin, “Paul and the Judaism/Hellenism Dichotomy,” 43–44.

ancient world.⁶⁸ This agenda would not only lead to new assessments of ancient cultural identities (adding complexity), it would also, in the process, expose the pervasive colonizing nature of methodologies themselves and frequent modern scholarly complicity in the perpetuation, even if unwittingly, of subjugating paradigms of past eras. As Slavoj Žižek cautions, “[I]nstead of imposing our notions of universality, universality—the shared space of understanding between cultures—should be conceived of as an infinite task of translation, a constant reworking of one’s own particular position.”⁶⁹ Such a move would allow historians of ancient religions and cultures to investigate in the present how received methods and traditions of scholarship on early Christianity and ancient Judaism are being redeployed toward newer forms of colonial subjugation, co-option, and control, as these methods continue to intersect with shifting paradigms of political, cultural, and social life in *our* time. A colonial-critical analysis of scholarly paradigms and methods does more than just expose the prejudices of the past; it unmasks the hidden (and always reemerging and reconstituted) power structures in the present and reveals modern scholarly participation therein.

⁶⁸ Space does not permit a fuller discussion of the move towards poststructuralist views of culture and group identity. The exemplary essay by Martin on Judaism and Hellenism, however, points in this direction, demonstrating the utility of more recent conceptions of cultural identity and the hybridity (both natural and imposed) that surfaces in ancient identity construction (see Martin, “Paul and the Judaism/Hellenism Dichotomy,” 59–61; cf. Wayne A. Meeks, “Judaism, Hellenism, and the Birth of Christianity,” in Engberg-Pedersen, *Paul beyond the Judaism/Hellenism Divide*, 17–27). Daniel Boyarin’s work on ancient Judaism and Christianity offers some possible models for how scholarship might rethink these ancient categories both separately and in relation to each other (see, e.g., “Hybridity and Heresy: Apartheid Comparative Religion in Late Antiquity,” in *Postcolonial Studies and Beyond* [ed. A. Loomba et al.; Durham: Duke University Press, 2005], 339–58; as well as his fuller assessment, *Border Lines: The Partition of Judaeo-Christianity* [Divinations; Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004]).

⁶⁹ Slavoj Žižek, *Welcome to the Desert of the Real* (New York: Verso, 2002), 66.

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